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David R. Carlin, Jr.
FEAST OF ST. MILL

The Editors
WAGES & MARKETS

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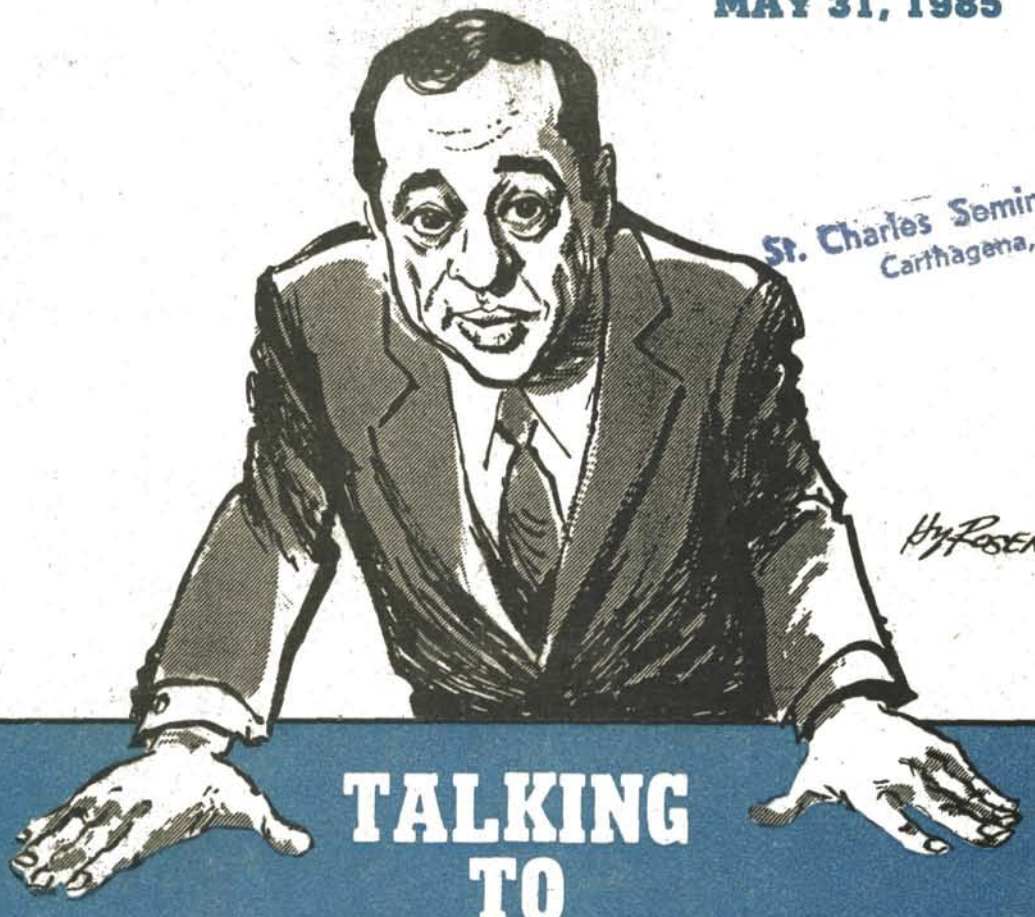

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TALKING TO CUOMO

An interview by Karen Sue Smith & Patrick Jordan

COMPARABLE WORTH: TWO VIEWS

Clifford Hackett Jan Rosenberg

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Correspondence

Beautiful temptation

Mystic, Conn.

To the Editors: Those of us who find that our ministry in life calls us to relate more to paper than to people may not get around to every issue of *Commonweal* every time. But our *chronos* can be God's *kairos* when we have a few minutes to discover an essay as beautiful and truth-filled and wise as John Garvey's "Temptation to be Right" [February 22].

Would that pastors might use this sensitive and intelligent piece as a homily to be repeated in several forms regularly!

PATRICIA KLUEPFEL

A collector's item

Philadelphia, Penn.

To the Editors: Another splendid issue [April 5].

I contribute the following headline to John Garvey's collection of *National Examiner* beauties:

"Electronic Wife Electrocutes Hubby"

(THE REV.) MICHAEL R. BECKER

The ruble squeeze

Fairfax, Va.

To the Editors: Jeffrey Hahn is right ["Yuri's Usurpers," March 22]. The Reagan administration is mistaken if it thinks it can achieve military superiority while Gorbachev is consolidating his position in Moscow. The Soviet economy is half the size of ours and American technology is superior to theirs. Nonetheless, the Soviets can squeeze rubles out of their people to match us missile for missile, weapon system for weapon system. And as William Perry (who served on the "Scowcroft" commission to determine the MX basing mode) has observed, our technological superiority only allows us a five-year edge in the deployment of strategic nuclear systems. Harold Brown claims that if no progress is made in Geneva. "The resulting balance in 1990 would show each side with approximately 15,000 strategic nuclear weapons, or about 5,000 more than today." After years of heavy defense outlays, we would be worse off than we are now because, as Perry says, we are approaching 100 percent missile accuracy. The proponents of American military superiority are looking for a quick fix to our nation's security problems. But there is no such thing. Let us hope that President Reagan now recognizes this fact.

Simultaneously, we cannot negotiate a quick solution to U.S. security problems in Geneva. Arms limitation agreements and changes in forces structures must be adopted to reduce the prospect of nuclear war, but clashing philosophical and political interests are the basis for East-West discord. It is linked to conflicting views of human rights, political liberty, and intellectual freedom. We must continue to talk with Moscow about arms control, whatever our differences, but crises associated with Soviet imperialism are likely over time to disrupt arms control negotiations.

The Austrian socialist, Bruno Kreisky, noted a year after Solidarity was decimated, "It takes at least ten years for another generation to arise which has not had the experience of defeat. Ten years after Hungary — Czechoslovakia. Ten years after Czechoslovakia — Poland. In the next ten to twelve years you will see it again."

Can arms control talks proceed in the face of another Hungary? Fears about a nuclear holocaust explain why many thoughtful people duck this question. But to ignore the real source of East-West discord is a flight from reality akin to the fantasies which drive the proponents of nuclear superiority.

RICHARD J. KRICKUS

A call to courage

Detroit, Mich.

To the Editors: Thanks for the article by Gordon Zahn, "On Not Writing a Dead Letter" [March 8].

Gentle prodding from Dr. Zahn is always helpful. Thank God he never gives up in calling the church (especially the bishops) to the courage of their convictions.

The recent letter from the United States Catholic Conference to each member of the Congress, urging a "no" vote on the MX was a step in the right direction. But Dr. Zahn is already correct in his insistence that the bishops must also communicate to the church that the strict conditions making deterrence morally acceptable are not being fulfilled. Such a clear judgment must have important consequences for all of us.

One saving factor, of course, is that acting on the judgments of the peace pastoral does not require continuing public statements by the bishops. With the moral guidance already provided by the pastoral, conscientious *adult* Christians continue to make their own decisions on this most grave moral issue. Nevertheless, a clear statement by the bishops would be good for their own integrity and enhance their role as moral teachers.

THOMAS J. GUMBLETON
Auxiliary Bishop/Detroit

Management morality

Wyandotte, Mich.

To the Editors: Abigail McCarthy ["Can We Light the Way?", February 8] calls for guidelines that would enable Catholics to examine the management systems within the church. These directives would be a part of the forthcoming pastoral, or a separate publication.

Her call is timely. When I recently attempted to explore the possibility for a limited pension based upon my years of teaching in Catholic schools between 1955 and 1964, the archdiocesan school office indicated — without apology —

(Continued on page 350)

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A FAIR DAY'S WAGE

WHAT'S A PERSON'S labor worth? A report in *Business Week* (May 6) on the compensation of the top managers in 259 leading corporations showed that the average chief executive received $1.1 million in 1984. That included income from stock options and other "long-term" compensation, and was a jump of 22 percent in a year when inflation ran at 4.3 percent. Counting salaries and bonuses alone, these executives still averaged $653,000 a year, up 12.7 percent. Average pay for top union officials, by comparison, was $98,000 in 1984, less than one-tenth of what the CEO's received. A U.S. senator's salary, of course, is $75,000 — leaving aside the fact that so many senators are millionaires before they run for office. An average school teacher's salary is about $21,000. The median family income is a little above that — but is often based on more than one salary.

What is the point of noting such extreme differences, which don't even extend to the millions of Americans who work full time and nonetheless end up below the poverty line? To hear the squeals produced by the Catholic bishops' comments in their draft pastoral on gross inequalities, one would think that only demagogues or people consumed by envy might be set to thinking by the vast sums paid our hard-working captains of industry. Aren't they the creators of wealth for the rest of us? And what about the yearly income of Michael Jackson ($35 million), of Dan Rather ($2.2 million), or the starting salary for young Patrick Ewing (yet to be determined)?

Actually, our thoughts had less to do with outrage than with a question raised elsewhere in this issue, first by Governor Cuomo (p. 333) when he asks "How do you measure your job at *Commonweal* with a Howard Johnson's clerk's job . . . an elevator operator against a computer operator?" and then by the discussion of "comparable worth" (pp. 336-42). Again and again we are told that the market determines what people earn, and to tamper with it in the name of equality is to proceed down the primrose path to economic irrationality. But the top executives' salaries reveal the theory's absurdity. Does anyone believe that the directors of IBM, Ford, and General Dynamics are constantly on the lookout to see whether they could replace their chief executives with an equally competent individual for a half a million or so less compensation? There may be an adequate market device for showing that Michael Jackson is really worth $35 million to his fans, i.e., record and ticket sales. But even where a corporation has performed impressively, who's to say that it is the genial genius of a Lee Iacocca that should get the millions in reward rather than the men and women of Congress who voted the Chrysler bailout, or the workers who cut back their incomes, or the consumers who paid higher prices thanks to the limits on Japanese imports? Even *Business Week* grouches when it sees T. Boone Pickens, Jr., receive almost $23 million last year for his takeover gymnastics while his company's stock has halved in value since 1981; yet the process of

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determining executive compensation is essentially the same even when it's carried out much more responsibly. It's done by directors and compensation committees — in other words, by associates, peers, and insiders — and both shareholders and the famous market are at a goodly remove.

What happens at the top also happens all the way down the line. Yes, the market plays a part, but so does power — the relative strength or weakness of trade unions, for instance. So do the historical and cultural assumptions we have about certain kinds of work — that they are "menial" or "life-saving" or "women's work." One of the central elements in the great capitalist revolution of modern times was to treat human labor as another commodity, to be freed from traditional attachment to the land or from guild regulation. But in practice humans have always resisted being treated as raw material, and only extraordinary pressure can make labor conform neatly to the laws of supply and demand, a fact that, as Lester Thurow showed in *Dangerous Currents*, has always been a stumbling block for pure market economic theorists.

Whenever we insert another cultural or political factor into the existing mish-mash of forces that determine hiring, promotion, and compensation — say, notions of affirmative action or comparable worth — we are certainly adding new complexities and, possibly, new problems. But it would be wrong to measure these things against some fiction of market efficiency, as though the present scheme of things, which awards the chairman of Ford $4 million for his 1984 compensation, a firefighter $25,000, and an aide in a nursing home for the elderly $10,000, were an expression of Platonic reason.

"That's our problem, Charlie – the more we get, the more we want."

OSAGE & OSSINING

We were all surprised to see a picture of Dresden in ruins on the front page of the morning paper. That had ended with V-E Day forty years a week before. Then we realized it was Philadelphia, the night after Mother's Day 1985, and we were fire-struck. Sixty homes razed, and hundreds of West Philadelphians made homeless following a bunker shootout and police helicopter bombing gone astray. MOVE, a back-to-nature collective with a history of lunatic and violent exploits, had brought itself and Philadelphia — its citizens and authorities — to the near point of primitivism. The maelstrom was so devastating in life, property, and reason even the *New York Post* recognized it as a "Night of Madness."

The startling thing is the madness was not relegated to the sect's members, but like the fire which ensued, had spread at some critical moment before to engulf without their knowing it those charged with civic authority. Who would bomb a mental hospital, except in Grenada? This was hardly the Sikhs' Golden Temple. Why would anyone attempt to bomb a fortified bastion in such a densely populated residential area, particularly when the authorities had previous reports of containers resembling gasoline cannisters having been raised up to the very rooftop they now contemplated bombing?

The statue of William Penn which looks down from Philadelphia's City Hall must have paled as the sky flamed over Osage Avenue. Was this not the Quaker city of brotherly love? Is it not the seat of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, and the American Friends Service Committee, both expertly qualified in the rudiments of nonviolent conflict resolution? At one time in the not so distant past Quakers had trained Philadelphia police personnel in nonviolent tactics. Why were their good offices not employed in this desperate situation?

Mayor W. Wilson Goode has said, "I don't know that we could have done anything differently." He indicated that he would approve the bombing again "in a similar situation," although not if he had known of the gasoline. Hadn't he been told? He will not answer for now. The mayor's rationale was clear: "People want a strong, decisive leader," he said. One recalls Nelson Rockefeller's choice of response at Attica in 1971. How different from the fruitful resolution Mario Cuomo salvaged at Ossining in 1983. Need the distance between Ossining and Osage Avenue have been so great?

The same day Philadelphia lay smoldering, a front-page headline in the *New York Times* declared: "Gains Reported on Use of Laser for Space Arms. Research Is Said to Find Way to Raise Power." It was Mayor Goode, quoted in the same edition, who said that, "*Everything worked until the bomb was dropped.*" And later, "It worked perfectly according to plan. The thing we did not anticipate in that was the fact that there would also be a resulting fire." In Philadelphia, Dresden, and elsewhere, Mayor Goode may have spoken the epitaph of our times.

In keeping with *Commonweal*'s usual summer schedule, only one issue will be published each month during June, July, and August. The next issue will be dated June 21.

A VOICE TO REMEMBER

Having suffered a severe stroke last January 30, Philip J. Scharper died on Sunday, May 5. Phil Scharper had been an editor at *Commonweal* in 1955-57 but that was, so to speak, only a warm-up for an extraordinary career in religious publishing. As editor-in-chief at Sheed & Ward between 1957 and

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1969, he presided over the introduction to a wide audience of Americans such theologians as Schillebeeckx, Küng, Rahner, and of course America's own John Courtney Murray. As the founding editor of Maryknoll's Orbis Books, he brought to the U.S. church the works of Gutierrez, Segundo, Boff — indeed, hundreds of voices from the churches in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

But even these two great dialogues — between European and American Catholicism, between the churches of the developed and developing nations — did not exhaust Phil Scharper's gift for facilitating the moral and intellectual exchanges demanded by our times. He was a pioneer of ecumenism; he edited books on Protestant and Catholic views of Catholicism, on Torah and the Gospel; he served on the New York Board of the National Conference of Christians and Jews; he was a director of the bishops' Commission on Ecumenical Affairs. With his wife Sally he wrote over thirty religious documentaries for network television, winning more than twenty awards, including four Emmies.

Although a man of the written word, Philip Scharper made an unforgettable impression as a speaker. His voice was resonant; his manner was formal, unafraid of old-fashioned eloquence, sometimes saying as much by his pauses as by his phrases. Whether speaking to college audiences on "sainthood" in the early 1960s, introducing Martin Luther King, Jr., at Riverside Church in 1967, addressing a publishers' group opposed to the war in Vietnam, appealing for understanding between Catholics, Protestants, or Jews, or defending the insights of liberation theology, the Scharper manner seemed to express perfectly the moral urgency and intellectual seriousness that were guiding threads in all his work.

"If there is one quality which more than any other characterized the noble soul of Phil Scharper," Father Robert Drinan declared in the funeral homily, "it is his love for the church." In 1962, as the opening of the Council approached, Phil Scharper wrote in *Commonweal* of the need to renew the church so that she would stand before the world "not as we Catholics have made her by our pride and folly, our apathy, our hardness of heart, our confusion of national interests and cultural constructs with the essence of the church — but as she is in the design of Christ: the splendid City on the mountain, its walls and towers constantly aglow as they faithfully reflect the Light of the Sun."

Ten years later, in December 1972, following the exhilaration of the Council and the turmoil of the post-conciliar years, Scharper was asked for a retrospective comment by *Commonweal*'s editors. After an acute analysis of the "nomadic church" and its new international dimension, Phil shifted to the personal — and one can hear that solemn voice in his affirmations:

"I can say 'credo in unam, sanctam, catholicam ecclesiam' more firmly than I could ten, or twenty, years ago. The church, not Christ, has always been the great trial of a Christian's faith and I, for one, see his lineaments in those of the church more clearly every day.

"Not, of course, that all is well. Too many in the church still ache for conformity and fear pluriformity. In the United States particularly there are feverish efforts to incorporate democratic structures within the life of the church; what is needed, however, is the instilling . . . of democratic *values*, and these are not always guaranteed by democratic structures. . . . Many still search for consensus and are alarmed by conflict within the church, as though major changes in any human grouping were ever wrought without conflict.

"Not, then, that all is well, but so much is better. Theologians trivialize the Good News less than did most of their predecessors. . . . So much triumphalism [has] been sapped, so much legalism been supplanted, so many real questions raised where before there were only firm irrelevant answers.

"A Pentecostal wind has risen, and like countless others I find this brief day of sun and frost an exciting one in which to be baptized and breathing."

Phil Scharper is no longer breathing, but his words, like his life's work, still speak to us — and will for a long time to come.

War & remembrance

VIETNAM RE-VIEWED

THE MEDIA & SELECTIVE HISTORY

JUST AS THE media played an important role informing and influencing the American public during the Vietnam war, they have now provided a retrospective view of the war which ended ten years ago — a view that will greatly influence the way the Vietnam era is remembered.

Remarkable and worthwhile as much of the retrospective coverage was, it had some serious shortcomings; whether the networks gave too much attention to Vietnam's victory celebrations, for example, has been pointed out. More important and less noticed was the oversimplified treatment of what occurred during the war years. American participation and attitudes are presented in a dramatized, polarized fashion.

In this made-for-television approach, attention is focused on three groups apparently intended to be representative.

The first group is comprised of those who served in Vietnam. They have, quite properly, finally been receiving some tributes for their efforts and sacrifices.

The second group is made up of government leaders of the period — Johnson, Rusk, Nixon, Kissinger, et al. The picture of this group that emerges, if carefully studied, is probably not terribly inaccurate. Yet it is difficult to capsulize all those shifting rationales, all those hopeful statements that eventually created a credibility gap. Television can at least provide a smattering of presidential speeches from that time, but it is probably impossible to capture the mix of good intentions, incrementalism, stubbornness, and self-deception which

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characterized the policies and attitudes of America's leaders.

The media's shortcut approach to recounting the Vietnam experience is most evident, or at least it should be, in the case of the third group — the opponents of American policy. In the media portrayals, particularly those on television, the opposition came from "demonstrators in the streets." Certainly the demonstrations were not unimportant. After the invasion of Cambodia in 1970, many Americans felt that they had to march in order to show their concern or outrage. But dramatic and visually interesting as some of the demonstrations were — and they do provide good pictures for television — they should not be used solely to represent the diversified groups that eventually coalesced against the war.

There were many among the demonstrators who were sincere and dedicated, and who were willing to stand up against Vietnam policy when that was not an easy position to take. But there were also those who were more interested in protesting as a form of rebellion, and whose subsequent actions called their motivation and/or maturity into question. Television often focused — as it did again in the recent coverage — on those few who burned American flags or carried Viet Cong flags.

What is overlooked in such a simplistic view of the Vietnam era is that there were many acts of courage in questioning and opposing the Vietnam policy — not in the streets, but in Congress, in churches and synagogues, in communities around the country. Those who dared to dissent, or even to doubt, had their patriotism questioned publicly by some of the nation's leading columnists and commentators. They were attacked for not standing behind the president, and were accused, ironically, of not caring about those fighting in Vietnam. "Nervous nellies" and later "nattering nabobs" were some of the nicer names they were called.

In Congress, initially, only Senators Gruening and Morse opposed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. They were summarily dismissed as mavericks and habitual naysayers. But as the war expanded, the dissenters gradually increased — Senators Gaylord Nelson, Bill Fulbright, Frank Church, George McGovern, Mike Mansfield, John Sherman Cooper, Eugene McCarthy were among the first. They were called "faint-hearted" and subjected to intense political pressures including the wrath of the White House. They received vast quantities of hate mail.

Some of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings were televised which helped to increase public awareness of the growing conviction among certain senators that the U.S. had undertaken an extremely costly and futile adventure in human, material, and policy terms. (Video from those hearings is apparently deemed too dull for current-day coverage.) The senators questioned Vietnam's real significance to American national interests and the shifting rationale for American policy, which in the beginning was supposed to be aimed largely at stopping China.

As the number of dissenters grew, so did their influence. But it was not until early 1968 that the opponents of U.S. policy began to enjoy significant public support. Even as President Nixon's second term began, dissenters were still being called unpatriotic and criticized harshly for opposing Mr. Nixon's Vietnam policies.

With the passing of time we have gained some perspective on the Vietnam experience. It would be a distortion of history, however, if the media version stood unchallenged, leaving the demonstrators to be remembered as the only opposition to the war. Those in Congress and around the country who worked against the war, with little support at first but ultimately with great effect, should not be overlooked.

HOYT PURVIS

(Hoyt Purvis is director of the Fulbright Institute of International Relations at the University of Arkansas, former Senate staff member, and co-author of Legislating Foreign Policy, *Westview Press, 1984.)*

Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

GIVE & TAKE

FROM AFRICAN FAMINE TO VATICAN ART

COLUMNISTS and their readers seem to deal in discontinuity — one month, one subject; the next month, another; and, in twelve months little or no concentration in depth on any one. This scattering of attention seems the hallmark of contemporary communication. The multiplicity of subjects covered and problems raised in one day's telecasts or in the pages of one day's newspaper seems to defy any person's capacity for emotional and intellectual response. And yet the people who work day after day, month in and month out, to correct injustice and to alleviate need look for response — and help — from the rest of us. They depend on information reaching us.

I take some heart from the fact that each column seems to begin or continue an exchange — sometimes with readers, sometimes from those working in a field related to the column's subject. And I am reminded that my own interest in any one subject is almost always the result of a seed planted long ago.

This fact became almost eerily clear to me shortly after I wrote about actress Liv Ullmann's travels on behalf of hungry children and her indignation that it had taken so long to draw media attention to the famine in Africa [January 11]. I happened to take an old book down from the shelf and out fluttered a letter written to me *twenty* years ago by Dé Groothuizen of the Grail Movement. I had met Dé in Rome on a visit during Vatican II. She was then a non-governmental representative to the FAO — the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization headquartered

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things. The letter was an update on news of Senator Dole and on her work.

Even as we were noting the other things in connection with the plight of Africa — that population is outstripping the resources of food and fuel and of the primitive agriculture, with the need to help African women — the traditional growers and marketers of family food — with better knowledge of nutrition and methods of production and preservation; with the dislocation brought about by the advancing desert. There it was also — the path to daily work, the writing of a newsletter, the talking to any groups who would listen, the acquainting of visitors, tourists, and church people with the work of the FAO, the offering of hospitality and instruction to students from Africa and other third-world areas. And there it was — the honest hope for the FAO-launched Freedom from Hunger campaign, for the upcoming World Food Congress, for so many of the worldwide initiatives to combat hunger.

All these years dedicated people like Dr. worked with the FAO on the problem of hunger which this year finally seized world attention in its most sensational form. The work and our support for it has never been enough but without it the current famine would be even more calamitous than it is. And now our support for the FAO is threatened — a danger I was alerted to by Patricia Young, national coordinator for World Food Day, when I mentioned before departing from the past.

The original Stockman budget proposals this year called for following the United States' withdrawal of support for UNESCO with withdrawal of support for the FAO. The proposal was not part of the budget the administration finally sent to Congress, but as Pat Young put it, "Once the idea has been floated, it's out there somewhere ready to surface again." It is up to those who care about the hungry to see that it does not translate into reality.

Other exchanges were precipitated by the column on the recommendation of the President's Task Force on International Private Enterprise that we give away our surplus food and that we redouble our PL 480 program — Food for Peace — (April 5). The same session of the staff of the U.S. House Select Committee on Hunger sought to inform me of the way a bill introduced by Representative Tony P. Hall sought to spell that out in legislative form.

The H.R. bill would *require* that 5 percent of our [illegible] stocks of grain and dairy products be channeled to the world's poor through our nonprofit agencies and the World Food Program. (Although Congress has already authorized such donations, the Department of Agriculture has yet to ship a single surplus bushel of wheat!) The bill also increases the tonnage of food aid under the Food for Peace program as suggested by the task force.

The legislation would authorize the sale of food to the poorest nations for local currency, instead of the dollars now called for, so that we could use the local currencies to promote agricultural development, expand markets for U.S. farm products, and promote small-scale private enterprise.

"A missed opportunity is moving beyond food aid to measures that have long-run impact. For very little money we could immunize children when they come into feeding centers. This would save thousands of lives and increase economic productivity," says Congressman Hall. "More food-for-work projects, using food as wages for workers to build the infrastructure needed for development — roads, schools, irrigation projects — are also needed." The currency saved by "monetizing" food could be used for non-food needs such as tools and building materials.

Ms. Jensen adverted also to the need for support for legislation to remedy the appalling increase in domestic hunger, as did many others who wrote to me — a subject for many columns in itself, but one which, happily has been treated at length elsewhere in *Commonweal* and the Catholic press in general.

In response to the last of these loosely related columns, that on the bishops' pastoral on economic policy [February 8], a letter to the editor suggested once again the selling of the Vatican art treasures. That seems to me rather narrowly Puritan and somewhat beside the point. Art belongs to everyone and is held in trust. But a letter from Ed Marciniak, Chicago lay leader who has toiled long and well in the vineyards of social action, dealt with one of the specifics of church as economic agent — the need for a philosophical underpinning for church institutions negotiating employee and labor contracts. A set of guidelines developed by Marciniak has been published and should certainly be a source for the bishops' final document if it is not already one.

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

Of several minds: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*

ON MILL'S FEAST DAY

ST. JOHN THE LIBERAL--DESPITE HIS THEORY

ACCORDING TO Gladstone, John Stuart Mill was a saint — "the saint of rationalism," he called him. Since the proper day for commemorating a saint is, of course, the anniversary of his or her death, I recently observed the feast of St. John the Liberal, who died May 7, 1873, in Avignon, where he was buried with his wife, the former Harriet Taylor Mill.

One year of his beloved Harriet's death, 1859, Mill published the book which remains his most celebrated and influential work, *On Liberty*. To my pious mind, there is no better way to celebrate Mill's feast day than by opening *On Liberty* and reading a few passages at random. Though it is many years now since I concluded that the sociological and ethical theories informing *On Liberty* are flawed beyond repair, I still can't help getting a feeling of uplift, a

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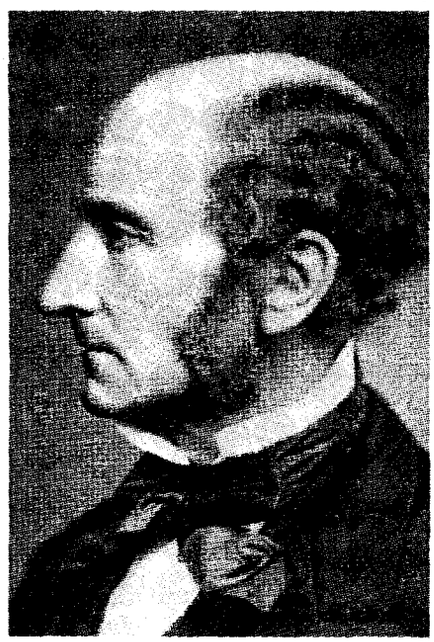
feeling I'm being done good to, whenever I re-read sentences like these: "Mankind are greater gainers by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves than by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest," or "The beliefs which we have most warrant for have no safeguard to rest on but a standing invitation to the whole world to prove them unfounded," or "Mankind can hardly be too often reminded that there was once a man named Socrates, between whom and the legal authorities and public opinion of his time there took place a memorable collision," or "He who knows only his own side of the case knows little of that," or "As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so it is that there should be different experiments in living," or "Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides."

The crucial theoretical shortcoming of *On Liberty* is the distinction Mill makes between "self-regarding" and "other-regarding" conduct. "The only part of the conduct of anyone for which he is amenable to society is that which concerns others," Mill says. "In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign."

The trouble with this distinction of course is that there is no sphere of conduct which is purely self-regarding, no part which merely concerns oneself. As in the physical world, so in the social and moral world: everything is connected with everything else; no one is an island; and what I do with or to my own mind or body certainly has an impact on the interests of others. It may be advisable to grant people large drafts of personal freedom; but such a policy can hardly be justified in terms of non-existent distinctions between self-regarding and other-regarding conduct.

Curiously enough, the other great English theoretical work published in 1859 was Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*. I say "curiously" since the tendency of Darwin's book, quite the opposite of Mill's, was to put the notion of self-regarding behavior out of court forever. Darwin wasn't the first biologist to teach the doctrine of the right fit between organism and environment; that had been current since late in the eighteenth century. But never before Darwin had anyone put the doctrine to such effective use or made the educated public so thoroughly familiar with it.

You contradict yourself if you attempt to be both a Darwinian and a Millite at the same time, if, that is, you try to be both an ecologist and an individualist. Yet it is precisely this contradiction which constitutes the political faith of the typical contemporary American liberal, who is (whether recognizing it in these terms or not) a disciple of both Darwin the ecologist and Mill the individualist, that is, an ecologist when talking about biological questions, but an individualist when talking about moral questions. The same person who insists on the dangers of pesticides and second-hand smoke will tell you that there exists a realm of conduct which is purely private and therefore not subject to interference by others. Note, this individual is not saying that there *ought* to be a realm of conduct that we agree to treat as private; that would be a very different and entirely defensible proposition. No, he or she says rather that there is, as a matter of fact, a realm of conduct which affects no one but the actor alone and any voluntary associates. This is pure Millism. It is also pure nonsense.



The revival of Mill's notion of self-regarding actions dates to the 1960s, when it was used, especially among the young, to justify certain modes of then unconventional conduct, e.g., drug use, novel fashions in dress and hairstyle, and that complex of behaviors traveling under the name of the sexual revolution.

In the short run, the revival of Mill's distinction had the effect of getting more people stoned and into bed with one another. For reasons which seemed clear enough at the time but appear obscure in retrospect, these outcomes were somehow deemed to be liberal and progressive. In the longer run, however, Mill's distinction has simply served to justify respectable forms of egoism, and these have been anything but liberal-progressive in nature. If the rule is that I am free to do whatever I please so long as I don't pick your pocket or break your leg, then I'm free to engage in unlimited getting and spending, free to join members of my interest group in single-mindedly pursuing our collective interests, free to ignore the needs of other citizens, and free to generally disregard all positive duties of citizenship. When liberals lament that Americans don't seem very interested in the liberal social justice agenda, they largely have themselves to blame. So well has the public learned the liberal doctrine about self-regarding actions that it realized this doctrine largely absolves them from social justice obligations.

Despite all this, I still love Mill and his *On Liberty*. Maritain was fond of making a distinction between the intuitive insights of philosophers and their attempts to conceptualize these insights, saying that the former might be sound even if the latter are defective. If ever there were a need for this distinction, it is in the case of *On Liberty*. DAVID R. CARLIN, JR.

(David R. Carlin, Jr., is a senator and deputy majority leader in the Rhode Island state legislature; he has also taught sociology and written frequently for Commonweal *and other publications. With this issue he begins a regular column in these pages.)*

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'TO SERVE & TO HAVE SOME FUN'

An interview with Mario M. Cuomo

AT THE BEGINNING of 1984, many Americans west of the Mississippi confused New York Governor Mario M. Cuomo with a middle-aged crooner whose first name was Perry. Not so today.

With the publication of his journal, *The Diaries of Mario M. Cuomo: The Campaign for Governor* (Random House, $19.95, 484 pp), his eloquent keynote address at the Democratic National Convention last July, and his controversial speech on abortion at the University of Notre Dame, the confusion over the governor's identity has abated in the public mind. Widely discussed as a possible presidential candidate in 1988, he has become a key figure in discussions of the future direction of American liberalism and the Democratic party. His personality as well as his ideas have accordingly become the objects of increasing scrutiny.

This interview was conducted by Karen Sue Smith and Patrick Jordan on April 18 at the governor's office in the World Trade Center.

YOU RECENTLY said that a "sea of red ink" has resulted from the Reagan tax cut of $750 billion and the Reagan trillion-dollar military budget. How would you propose to balance the federal budget?

CUOMO: First of all, I think it's important that we nail down the fact that, while they call themselves conservatives, the people in command have given us the biggest budget and the biggest deficit in our history. That says a lot of things. It says that they're not opposed to government; they're opposed to specific *uses* of government. And it says that they aren't credible because they promised us a balanced budget after three years. Kemp and Reagan say, in effect, we're going to grow our way out of the deficit. The vast majority of the Republicans — even the vast majority of the conservatives and all the rest of the rational people — say, of course, you have to do something about the deficit. How?

I could escape this question by saying it's not my place to answer, it's their place. And it is. But they haven't done it. I'll make a prediction, however, that what Fritz Hollings has said, what Bob Dole said in the beginning, what the governors have said as a group, is do it across the board. Take down defense. Take down some social spending if you will, but not means-tested programs. And you have to do something about revenues. We *must* do revenues. That does not mean a tax increase that would punish the middle class and be a disincentive. You could institute a corporate minimum tax that gets General Dynamics and those great big hitters — everybody knows they're ripping us off by anybody's definition. They don't need to be free of taxation as an incentive to build missiles, they have a virtual monopoly. So, I think you have to deal with revenues. You bring down the social side. You bring down the defense. You do it across the board the way we did in this state in 1983 to deal with the mini-deficit — only $1.8 billion.

This is the 450th anniversary of the death of Thomas More. Recent studies portray More as a man of no small ambition. The same has been said of you. What is the relationship between public service and personal ambition?

CUOMO: What is personal ambition? The desire to get to heaven? It depends on how you define personal ambition. If you mean ambition in terms of material things — *wealth* — you don't get wealthy in this business. You get poor in this business. I had to sell my diary, frankly, because I had no money. I'm not embarrassed to admit I had no money. I could make all the money I want; I always could. But we spent eleven years in this business and used up what savings we had, with five children. I'm not complaining. The point is, if you want to get wealthy, this is not the place to be.

Fame? You have to be stupid to really want fame. If you want 51 percent of the people to say you're good, what do you pay? You pay the price of 49 percent of the people saying you're an idiot, arrogant, stupid, and — if they can't think of anything else — probably lascivious. So, no, I don't honestly think that I'm driven with a desire for fame. I think it's possible for me to win plaudits and applause as a public servant when I don't deserve it and I know I don't. And it's possible for me to

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be condemned, as I have been from time to time, when I don't deserve it. It's possible to get applause when you deserve it and condemnation when you deserve it, too. But much of it is irrelevant as a true measure of your performance or your conduct. So, I don't make it a test of how I'm performing.

Power? I hope I'm not that sick! I'm afraid of the power, frankly. I feel more like Lincoln, I think, who apparently didn't enjoy the headache of the power. He took it as a kind of obligation. So, in terms of fame, wealth, and power, I don't think these are my ambitions.

My ambition? To spend as useful an existence as possible and have some fun at the same time. Yes, that is my ambition; that motivates me, though I understand that I may not achieve anything. Still, the *effort* is worthwhile and can justify my existence. I'll settle for that. The chance to make the good effort in this important work and have some fun at the same time. That's my ambition.

Thomas More? I don't like what they're doing to him. I don't like what Marius did to him [Richard Marius's biography, *Thomas More*; see *Commonweal*, May 3, p. 286]. I don't want to read that Thomas More was obsessed sexually, that he should have been a monk, and married his second wife only because she was past child-bearing years and, therefore, he didn't have to stay with her. I want to believe the Lone Ranger was the Lone Ranger. I want to believe Thomas More was Thomas More. I don't need to see his warts. I'm surrounded by people with warts; I have my own warts. I want the Thomas More who put his head on the block. I don't want to hear that Joe DiMaggio got the lump in pressure moments.

Now that the presidential campaign abortion debate has subsided, what is your own assessment of that dialogue? Do you think that Catholic Democratic politicians are under any particular handicap on this issue which will come up again and again?

CUOMO: Under a handicap? I wouldn't call it a handicap, a disadvantage, unless you want to describe every belief that you have that's not shared by 51 percent of the people as a handicap. Then, for example, my position on the bishops' pastoral on the economy (which I expressed again at St. Peter's College in Jersey City on April 16), would be a disadvantage. Novak and Buckley and these people who are beating up on poor Archbishop Rembert Weakland, they might have some support among Catholics. But I think the Catholics are wrong for feeling that way. But I wouldn't think that a position that says it's going to do something for the poor is a disadvantage politically at the moment.

So, the Catholic view of abortion, even if it happens to put you at a disadvantage politically, I couldn't call that a handicap. That's the way it is. As a Catholic, you are what you are. You believe what you believe. You are using the word handicap to suggest that there is something *unfair* about it. I don't think so.

Is a Catholic less likely to win political office in this country at this point in time because of his view on abortion? Well, it would depend.

Let's stay with the abortion debate for awhile. I think it was an extremely good thing overall. I think Archbishop O'Connor did a good thing, when you look back. I think raising this question was a good thing. Did it help the Democrats? No. It helped feed a mood that was against the Democrats. And it didn't beat the Democrats. It probably increased the margin a bit, but politically, I regard it as inconsequential. But I think it was good that it came up. I do think it was good that Archbishop O'Connor helped to bring it up. And I do think it was good that I went to Notre Dame, although I had great reservations about it at the time. It's the only time I ever perspired. Matilda made that point. She said, "I never saw you perspire before. I saw you give speeches when you were sick, when you had a temperature, but you never perspired." And I said, "That's because I was never that worried before." The discussion was good. Why? The problem remains. It hasn't been solved, and we're not near a solution.

The problem is: How do you deal with a proliferation of abortions that everybody would admit, if they were candid, is undesirable? I don't know of any woman who calls herself pro-choice who says abortion is desirable. That a woman should have this *option* — you'll hear that. But not that abortion is desirable. I think there is near unanimity on the proposition that if we could avoid the necessity for abortion, that would be a better situation.

How do you do that? That's the problem we haven't solved. Do you do it by passing a law? Obviously not. Do you do it by encouraging the Supreme Court to reduce the period in pregnancy during which abortion is allowed? How do you encourage the Supreme Court to do that under our legal system? Do I think a Catholic would lose if he came out and said that you should be against abortion? No. *I'm* against abortion. What if a Catholic came out and said you should be against abortion *and* you should adopt a constitutional amendment? I would say then, yes, that would hurt you, and it should hurt you because you can't adopt a constitutional amendment. There is none.

What if a Catholic came out and said, "I'm not opposed to abortion in all cases, or in many cases"? Do you think that a Catholic would have a chance with the Catholic community as a candidate?

CUOMO: I don't know "the Catholic community." I have a guess that there are a number who are immutably fixed to the proposition that you can't possibly say abortion is right. They would say: all abortion is a fundamental matter of life and death, and if you don't feel that way I'm not going to vote for you. That's a hard core of Catholics, and by Catholics I mean baptized people who would call themselves Catholics if you asked them. By hard core I mean, of the people who go to church, 25 . . . 30 percent — that's high, I would guess. I would say there is a sizable number of Catholics who wouldn't want to write it on a piece of paper or say it out loud, but who are confused on the subject of abortion even with all that the bishops are trying to do to get the message across. That's one of the reasons they're trying so hard to get the message across. Daniel Maguire and some theologians are saying [in his book

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are wrong. That would shake me, too, if I were a bishop. If seventy theologians say: "Look, Augustine and Aquinas and . . . you're not even right about the basic proposition." That's upsetting to a bishop, and it should be. Apparently, this is how Geraldine Ferraro was interpreted, as saying there is some question about whether abortion is right or wrong in the case of rape. Would that hurt you with Catholic voters? With some, I'd say yes. With some Orthodox Jews, yes. Also with some other religious and areligious people who happen to think abortion is wrong — this is not purely a religious proposition. I would guess, yes, it will hurt you some.

You recently had an exchange in the* National Review *on the abortion issue in which you noted the pragmatic course taken by the antebellum Catholic hierarchy in the U.S. in not opposing slavery. Are you really proud of the stand those bishops took ? Granted that a certain consensus is needed before moral principles can be translated into law, don't we remember the leaders who pushed at the edges of an existing consensus to shape a new one ?

CUOMO: Now, you have raised a question which accuses me of saying that I was proud of the bishops who refused to come out against slavery. I in no way said that. (Boy, am I glad I'm awake!) I never said I was proud of them. Let's get the context: I'm here minding my own business, tortured as everybody is by the subject of abortion, a governor who isn't even at the national level. All of a sudden the issue arises and the archbishop says, "You might be excommunicated." (At least that's the way it sounds on TV — with my wife and son watching the program.)

No one struck me from my horse with lightning and said, "You used to be Mario; now you're Matthew, write me a piece." In that context the bishops' letter circulates [a letter from the bishops of New York State on "Abortion: the Role of Public Officials"] and now I'm accused, even before they knew what my position was, of being for abortion: "Were you alive at the time of slavery, you probably wouldn't have opposed slavery. And what do you say to that?" So we responded. We said, "You guys can't read history because the archbishop *then* wasn't opposed to slavery. Now *you* brought it up, bishops. You're the ones who circulated this and said let's use slavery as an analogy." I said, "That's a very bad analogy. As a matter of fact, the point it makes is that you can be a bishop and differ with other bishops and other Catholics and other citizens about the practical way to implement *politically* a solid theological position." What those nineteenth-century bishops said was, "Of course slavery is a sin; the question is whether we should make it against the *law* as well." And they said that it wasn't practical to do that yet.

I have a better example: birth control. And I reject all this talk by the bishops and archbishops that birth control isn't the same as abortion. Of course it's not. One is the taking of life; one is the aborting of the potential for life. But in terms of our church teaching they are both fundamental sins. And so, what I said on slavery was, "You had bishops who went both ways. I'm not about to condemn them. You can say it would have been better had they opposed slavery, but you can't say it was a sin then unless you're going to condemn all those bishops as hypocrites."

What should the bishops have done about slavery? I don't know; I don't know the time well enough. I've read all I can, but I wasn't there. I'm here. I know what they should do about abortion here: make it possible to have fewer abortions. The best way to do that is not to ask for a constitutional amendment. That's going to make it less possible because then that's where you'll fight it out. What I'm saying to them is, "Why don't you find practical ways like we're trying to in our state — New Avenues to Dignity? Why don't you open hospices everywhere for pregnant women and say to them, 'You can have the baby.' At the end of the line, you say to them, 'If you don't want to take care of the baby, we'll put it up for adoption. And we'll do it anonymously, and pay every penny of the cost.' Why don't you reach out to every one of these pregnant kids in the ghettos? You want to avoid abortion? Don't talk to me about making a law. That's easy. That doesn't cost you anything. Go into the mean streets. Go into the ghettos."

Now, I haven't heard any response to that.

What was your other curve ball? Give me the second part again.

Granted that a certain consensus is needed before moral principles can be translated into law . . .

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CUOMO: Good. Now, a lot of people would not grant that. Most people who are arguing with us are missing that point entirely, like the radical right, the Falwells, and the supply-siders who are the fundamentalists in religious terms. They say, "He says that his morality is formed by consensus." That's a distortion. I hope they're smart enough to know that it's distortion: then they're only wicked for deceit. But if they're dumb, then we're really in trouble. What I'm saying is not that I form my morality by consensus: I form my morality by my conscience. On birth control, on abortion, I listen to the church. If they order me *ex cathedra*, then I either quit the club or go with them. But most of the time they don't do that, as we know. And so, you have to do it from your conscience; I do it that way; I behave that way. If my conscience tells me abortion is wrong, then I'm obliged to tell my daughter not to do it. If people ask me, I tell them, "I think it's wrong."

But to get it changed on the civil side. . . . Would a law need a consensus? Then the question comes: how do you develop a consensus? By pointing a finger at them and accusing them? No. By asking them for a constitutional amendment? No. We tried that. Even the bishops gave up. By doing something else? What? Set examples, give options, prove you're beautiful, prove that love works, be a leader.

We're not leaders. We're perceived as hypocrites. And as long as we're perceived as hypocrites, we won't get it done. To say, well, we can afford to be hypocrites; we'll condemn the poor; we'll forget Cardinal Bernardin's seamless garment; we'll erect new strategies. . . . The president ran against the poor. Everybody knows that. But he was on more consecrated ground, surrounded by more vestments . . . I once said, "He was surrounded by so many vestments, if he had died in the middle of the campaign, he would have been assumed up to heaven." Now, that doesn't mean the church should come out against the president. Not at all. But the Sermon on the Mount says you're supposed to take care of the prostitutes, the poor people. And the president is saying just the opposite. He's saying you're supposed to have missiles, tax cuts.

Do you still support the notion of a verifiable nuclear freeze ?

CUOMO: Yes.

The U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on peace states that not only should steps be taken to end development and deployment of nuclear weapons, but that the number of existing weapons must be reduced. Why do you support the basing of a new naval nuclear-strike force in New York harbor ? Do economic considerations outweigh all others ?

CUOMO: It is not a new nuclear-strike task force. The federal government can neither deny nor confirm that there'll ever be a nuclear weapon aboard the *U.S.S. Iowa*. I want the *Iowa* for the jobs that are there, obviously. Why am I allowing Nine Mile Two to go forward? I don't like nuclear power plants. But I have to put people to work. The bishops have another pastoral — on the economy — that says the biggest problem is there aren't enough jobs. There is more than one truth living in the same world at the same time, and sometimes they are competitive. We need work. We have a 7.3 percent unemployment rate, maybe 40 percent in Bedford-Stuyvesant, and there are people saying we should pass up all these jobs. I made the practical, prudential judgment that we ought to have the *Iowa*.

I mean no disrespect for the bishops. I put the bishops' peace letter along with the economy letter, and they're very similar. I give greatest credit to their view of the moral substructure of the arguments. They're much better when they talk about our obligation for peace, against violence, etc., than they are when they talk about how many missiles. They're not as expert on the economy—practical implementations—as some others. That does not mean I disregard what they say. But I don't put as much emphasis on these specifics as I do when they're talking about morality. Number of nuclear missiles? What do I know? What does Bishop Malone know? Does he know more than I do? Maybe Bryan Hehir. . . . So, I listen, I try to study, I read everything. Give me the whole question again.

The U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on peace states that not only should steps be taken to end development and deployment of nuclear weapons, but that the number of existing weapons must be reduced. . . .

I believe that. And I believe they can be reduced even though the *Iowa* exists. That's what the arms talks are about. They're not talking about the *Iowa*.

We talk about "the poor," most of whom are women and children; "the elderly," most of whom are women and many of whom are poor; we talk about "single parents," most of whom are women; we talk about job creation at the low-paying end of the wage scale, and mean jobs for "women." Since women do not comprise a single bloc of voters, what can the Democrats do to earn the support of women in 1988 ?

CUOMO: Well, you mean poor women and single-parent women. I think the Democrats should do what we're doing in this state, frankly. We have geared our programs to that population. We're doing even more next year. The increase in welfare, which the bishops asked for, should be 25 percent, and I'm not proud of making it only 10 percent. I'm delighted I got an increase, but I would prefer 25 percent to 10. That goes basically to AFDC which is 90 percent women and children. So, that's policy the federal government is not pursuing; we are, and are beefing up programs there. We are putting a new emphasis on putting those women to work. Keep the temporary employment assistance program; it takes welfare money and breaks it up between an employer and a check. If it's $300 for example, we give you $150, give an employer $150 for hiring you. And if the employer was going to pay $500, now he only has to pay $350, gets you cheap, and it works beautifully. It worked for home relief. We put 1500 people on. We hope to put 3500 women to work that way. They say it's a small amount. Well, I don't know. That's 3500 families that will be self-sustaining.

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Also, pay equity. The federal government says comparable worth isn't worth talking about. We feel differently. Doing it by statute is practically impossible. You'd have to write a definition of "comparable worth." How do we measure your job at *Commonweal* with a Howard Johnson clerk's job? How do you measure an elevator operator against a computer operator? However, you can do it in collective bargaining. You can do it in negotiation. And that's what we've done. We're working on pay equity — comparable worth, if you will — between the public employees and the state by collective bargaining. Well, don't you still have the definition problem? No, you negotiate. You don't *need* what a statute requires — explicit language. You just settle. You say, "These jobs will move up to here." All the women tell their union people, "We like that arrangement, let's make the deal." So, you make progress, even without the definition.

Women have been oppressed for generations. So have blacks and Hispanics. The net result is that they're at the bottom of the ladder. The Pelagians say, "You can make it. Get up out of that gutter with your wooden leg, seventy-year-old man; you can make it if you really try. You don't need grace from government. You make it on your own." We're different. I think you have to do what we're doing in this state. Something that's symbolic and works well, too. Appoint the first woman to the Court of Appeals. Call it symbolism, yes. But it's important symbolism. I kiss you to express my affection or my condolence. I send you Christmas cards. It's symbolism. And if that says I remember, it's important. The federal government does just the opposite. The signal they want to send to women is: you're not special. We'll pretend you are, but when it comes to the Equal Rights Amendment, we won't even talk about it. As a matter of fact, we'll change

THE BISHOPS' LETTER

PRAISE & RESERVATIONS

THERE'S good news and bad news about the bishops' pastoral on the American economy. The good news is that the bishops'draft has not been ignored.

It's being dissected and analyzed and discussed in journals and in forums like this one all over the country. It has jolted all of us out of some easy assumptions about our national economic life and forced us to look beyond our own relative security and ease. At a time when selfishness is being sanctified as a prerequisite for economic progress, when compassion is being derided as weakness and the doctrines of Malthus are far more popular than those of St. Francis, the bishops remind us of the special obligation to the poor that we take on when we describe ourselves as Catholics. . . .

If they did nothing else in their letter, this alone should earn our gratitude . . . that they reminded us of what it means to be a Christian.

The bad news is that instead of the emerging consensus among Catholics the bishops had hoped for, there's been a chorus of castigation condemning some of what they have written. . . .accusing the bishops of ignoring history and embracing the so-called "failed policies of the past," accusing them of believing that government can help improve the condition of people's lives, that we don't have to leave the least among us to the mercies of a free market.

But if anyone is ignorant of the past, it's those critics who fail to acknowledge the reasons for the success of the American economy. That success didn't just happen. It wasn't inevitable. It wasn't just the happy result of rugged individualism. . . .

Government had a role. An important one. From the very beginning, government acted to make life better for our people. It provided land for homesteaders, for railroads, for private colleges. . . . It broke down the walls of legal segregation that made us two nations, separate and unequal. It helped make our society freer, fairer, more just. . . . And without suggesting that we must replicate exactly every program tried in the past, isn't it just common sense to recognize the great contribution government made— and can still make—to the future of this country?

The bishops do.

. . . To be honest, I have my own reservations about parts of the draft pastoral. . . . I believe government has a role in putting people to work. But the bishops focus almost exclusively on public-sector jobs. I think we have to concentrate on investments that train people to work in the private sector. We simply can't build a growing economy on the public-sector payroll. . . . But none of the considerable disagreement about what the bishops call their "policy applications" should draw attention away from the enormous contribution the document makes by advancing a single proposition that I believe is unarguably right and should remain the basis for any amendments.

The proposition is this: There is more poverty—more economic suffering—in this country than there has to be. We shouldn't resign ourselves, the bishops are telling us, to so-called "iron laws" of economics that would confirm a few in their riches and condemn millions of others to ghettos and unemployment offices and welfare lines. . . .

At bottom, that's the important contribution this document can make. It tells us that it's not possible to call yourself Catholic and ignore the poor. . . .

MARIO M. CUOMO

(These remarks are taken from Governor Cuomo's speech on the bishops' economic pastoral at St. Peter's College, Jersey City, N.J., April 16, 1985.)

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our minds about the ERA. We used to be for it, now we're against it.

What about at the national level for Democrats ? Is there some sort of strategy ?

CUOMO: Same thing. Heavy emphasis on programs that would put AFDC people to work. Take the Reagan rhetoric and do a jujitsu on it. "Hey, you're always talking about work and opportunity and macho and making it the way we always made it. You're the opportunity society, right? We agree with you: Here's a woman who needs a little opportunity. Let's have a program that will give it to her. Let's buy her a little opportunity."

Three basic tenets of neoliberalism are: liberal rhetoric coupled with fiscal conservatism; job creation and retraining in the hands of the private sector rather than the government; and stress on entrepreneurial activity versus the stress on collective bargaining. First, what do you think of these ?

CUOMO: One piece at a time. First of all, I reject the label "neoliberal." That's why I made up "progressive pragmatism."

Do you want to know my philosophy? Here, this is my philosophy. You take this home [drops New York budget on desk]. That's my philosophy.That's the budget. It's all in there. I mean, I can't escape this. It's like saying, what religion do you belong to? You could write down your religion, or you could refer to how you behave. The reality is the budget, and the budget describes what I am. It has the aspirations unfulfilled in the beginning, but this is a message that says what we should be doing. Now I'll take all the pieces — start at the top.

Liberal rhetoric with fiscal conservatism . . .

CUOMO: Hold it. If liberal rhetoric is contradicted by fiscal conservatism then it's hypocrisy. Liberal rhetoric means government has an obligation to help those people who cannot help themselves. It means that you've not done enough when you've made the free enterprise system strong because the free enterprise system will leave people out; you have to deal with people too old, too weak, or who just don't get a job. If that's liberal rhetoric, I accept it. I believe that's consistent with fiscal intelligence and prudence. If you define conservatism to mean: never spend money on liberal rhetoric, then it's hypocrisy. I believe the best example of how it works well is the state of New York where we talk about AIDS and we put up money for AIDS; we talk about the homeless and we put up more money for the homeless than any state in the country, although we have a lot of people unhappy about the speed with which we spend it. We talk about welfare and we increase it. We get accused by the *New York Post* of being too generous. At the same time we cut taxes. We had the first GAAP balanced budget [conforming to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles] in the United States.

The worst mistake we've made, those of us who have made the mistake, is spending, spending, spending, to the point where we couldn't afford it. That abuse discredited the liberal movement. If we can keep it credible, we'll keep our strength. Now, that means we can't increase welfare by 25 percent; we can only increase it 10 percent, because we have to balance the budget. That's the way I see fiscal reform.

I wrote a speech, in 1974, in which I said, "The neatly symmetrical columns of a balanced budget would be the emblem of hypocrisy if the price of it was to leave out legitimate needs of people." I didn't come into this business to be an accountant. I came into this business to help people. So, the balanced budget, the fiscal austerity, the GAAP balance — all of that — is a necessity, and I do it enthusiastically because it makes it possible to generate wealth and spend the wealth on good programs. But it is a *must*. We can't afford to be anything but fiscally conservative at this time in this place.

The second point was job creation and retraining in the hands of the private sector rather than the government.

CUOMO: Much better than government because government is too expensive. Government can be the employer of last resort. But it should be the ultimate resort. Why? Because it's not good economically. Taxpayers pay for government jobs. It'd be much better to encourage private-sector jobs. That's where the emphasis should be. New York has the largest public payroll in the United States after the federal government. But I would deemphasize it in favor of private sector and that's one of the disagreements I have with the bishops. I would predict that their letter will change that emphasis. I certainly hope so.

The last point is the stress on entrepreneurial activity rather than on collective bargaining.

CUOMO: I reject the hypothesis that there is a kind of a contradiction. I very much believe in the entrepreneurial process. I believe in collective bargaining. I encourage it. I think it's perfectly consistent with the entrepreneurial system.

One of the emphases we'll have in this state next year is

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proprietorship for working people. Western Airlines. I flew back from Las Vegas. The captain came out. Said, "Hello, Governor." I said, "I'm a governor and your attendants are treating me very nicely. But they're treating everybody that way. I talked to a woman in the back and she said the same thing." He said, "That's because we own 32 percent of this business." Proprietorship. Nothing beats it. The low-income housing project in Forest Hills was a success, not because I made a clever arrangement in 1972, but because somebody much smarter than I said, "Let's make it the first co-op low-income housing project in the United States." It's worked. Proprietorship: give them a sense that it's theirs. Give them their own house and they'll cut the grass forever. Give them a piece of the business. I believe in the union movement. I believe in collective bargaining. I believe in entrepreneurship. I believe that you can combine all these things.

Okay, but you don't deny that there is something called the neoliberal movement – Charlie Peters, the* Washington Monthly *and all that. What do you think about this movement ?

CUOMO: I'll not join the movement. I prefer the progressive pragmatists.

Do you feel the neoliberal line is going to be helpful to the party ? Clarifying issues ?

CUOMO: I think the more you talk, the more you debate, the more you argue, probably the more you learn and the sharper you get. It would be difficult for me to discourage such groups. I guess you'd be stronger politically if everybody joined one club and said, "We'll call ourselves 'X.' " But I don't mind all the argumentation. I think they're missing the obvious. . . . We said it at Yale and I think it's so clear and so right. The *New York Times* did an interesting thing [April 18]: Phil Gailey took ten or eleven Democratic candidates; shot down every one. What he said in effect was that they were all talking about new positions and it's not getting them anywhere; there is nothing new. What do you need that's new? Reagan cited Roosevelt, Truman, and Kennedy over and over. I keep wondering, why should we pick up anything new? So, I don't know about this movement. I don't think in terms of neoliberal. I know what I believe. I've written it for eleven years. It's never changed.

Family is a powerful metaphor you often use to explain the responsibilities of government. But is family a viable metaphor for a political process beholden to conflicting interest groups ?

CUOMO: By family, I mean a sense of mutuality, interdependence, even redistribution. We all believe in redistribution, even the supply-siders. The question is to whom do you redistribute, and from whom? Would the supply-siders say that they're against the public school system? Would they say they're against all the uses of dollars for community purposes? Defense is redistribution. A pacifist might say, "You take my money and you spend it on a missile. That's not fair. You redistributed my wealth." A dam. Does anyone say: "What do you mean the Grand Coulee Dam? Let them go get their own water. Why should I pay for the TVA? I don't live in Tennessee. I live in Niagara Falls. I have all the power I need." It's all redistributed; that's family -- interdependence. And I use the metaphor only to suggest to people, "Look, be honest with yourselves. The only way we can live is collectively. You can't each be an individual who survives on his or her own. We all take, in one form or another. And how much we take, how much we give, under what circumstances, that we can argue about."

So, all these people like [Paul] Laxalt and the others who simplistically said at the Republican convention, "Well, family is fine for home but not for government. We're not a sniveling, whining society that says we're going to reduce everybody to the same level." That's cheap rhetoric. That's not what I'm saying. Would the supply-siders say to you, "You ought not to use government funds to take care of the child with cerebral palsy who belongs to parents who could not care for their child?" Would the supply-siders say to you, "If you can't get the money out of the church basket, or rather the foundation, or out of the synagogue, the child is on his own?" Of course not. So we all agree on family. Mine may be a little bit larger, a little bit more generous, and a little bit more fun.

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Woman, work & the question of 'comparable worth'

IS IT REALLY WORTH IT? TWO VIEWS

CLIFFORD HACKETT

Better from a distance

SHOULD WOMEN be paid for jobs on the basis of what men earn in entirely different jobs? The answer would seem to be yes following the federal equal-pay-for-equal-work law of 1963 which laid the ground for improved work opportunities for women. Yet the idea, called comparable worth, is finding it difficult to emerge, as some had predicted it would, as the "issue of the 80s" for women.

The appeal of comparable worth is considerable — especially from a distance. It seems to address a basic economic injustice: men earn more than women whether the measure is annual income, average hourly wages, starting salaries, or concentration in top-paying jobs. This differential also exists within jobs and professions, and persists even as women are moving into new job fields and upward in career tracks. Clearly, comparable worth defenders say, these discrepancies are unfair, perhaps illegal, and should be ended by law.

There is another broad appeal to justice related to the issue: the seeming inability of the free market economy to provide reasonable pay scales crossing vocational lines. Some of us are appalled by plumbers who get $40 for a house call; others are repelled by lawyers who earn $200 an hour. Johnny Carson and NFL football players prompt many to say, "No one can be worth that much!" An unstated comparison in our minds pits these "over-paid" exemplars against those of us who perform the hum-drum jobs which keep the economy going or who (and these are mostly women) undertake the most humane, compassionate, and bedeviling jobs in all societies: nursing, child care, and primary education — all low-paying labors. Is this pay disparity fair? Clearly not.

But the closer one looks at comparable worth, the more doubtful its real value appears. Instead of helping move women into new jobs as the equal-pay law did, comparable worth seems to give up that fight. It pleads for higher pay for women on two quite different, but equally dubious, bases: first, it argues that jobs women actually perform are undervalued and should be upgraded by law; second, it maintains that women's abilities, education, and experience are undervalued and they should get more money no matter *what* jobs they do.

Whatever happened to the premise of equal pay for women, that if women earned the same as men in a particular job category they would more surely compete for those jobs? For many reasons, women still do not always seek the same jobs men do. Comparable worth advocates conclude society must reevaluate the work women do choose. But this revaluing without regard to the job market is at the heart of the comparable worth dispute, the cause of dismay among almost everyone except those who think women would gain from a radical remaking of the economy.

Comparable worth entails assigning numbers to every important aspect of every paying job. Some incredible mechanism of government would then insure that everyone with the same numbers would get the same pay. Who assigns the numbers and weighs job skills against education, experience versus risks, and so on? A committee of personnel experts! But doesn't the open market already perform its own kind of valuation when people put their skills out for examination and competition? Yes, but unfairness results because women's work or women themselves are undervalued.

Let's be clear about what comparable worth is and isn't. It is not about the fact that football players and movie stars earn too much money, but that women make less money than men. Comparable worth is not concerned with the kinds of jobs women do, only how much they earn. Finally, comparable worth is not about job opportunity, job mobility, or job advancement, but about whether the open marketplace for jobs, with its flaws, should be abolished.

What is wrong with this new approach? First, it ignores the

(Continued on page 340)

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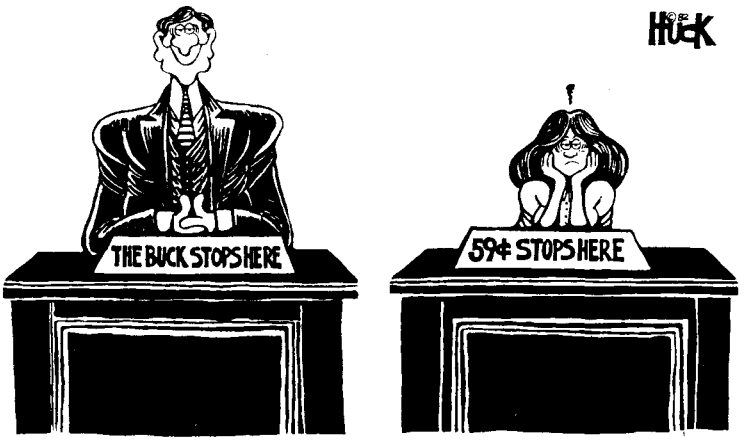

JAN ROSENBERG

Judging on the merits

AT A TIME of Republican dominance and the collapse of the Democratic party, of unparalleled union decline and demoralization, of resurgent racial antagonism, when "feminist" still connotes professional upper-middle-class women, along comes comparable worth, a movement which at its best flies in the face of those dominant trends. Comparable worth is the latest collective effort to raise the wages of working women in the labor force. It grows out of the dying embers of the old political demand, "Equal Pay for Equal Work," the success of which depends on the elusive, unlikely integration of jobs by men and women.

Even today, more than twenty years after the Equal Pay Act of 1963, women's average pay is only 59 percent of men's and most women continue to work in the same "pink collar ghettos" that their mothers and grandmothers worked in. Some of the particulars are instructive: in 1983 the occupations of secretary, registered nurse, and child-care worker were each more than 95 percent female; billing clerks, librarians, waiters and waitresses, and health technicians all had well over 80 percent female employees. In 1980 about 80 percent of all women were still concentrated in "women's jobs" (typically defined as 70 percent or more of the work force).

The undisputed facts, then, are that most women and men continue to work at different jobs, and that women's jobs are paid less than men's and frequently offer fewer opportunities for advancement. The question is: Are women underpaid, or are their jobs simply worth less than men's?

The proponents of comparable worth emphasize both overt and institutional occupational and wage discrimination against women, as well as the deeper structures of sex role socialization, cultural attitudes about women, the family, and the value of women's work in which discrimination is embedded. They conclude that the work women do is paid less simply because it is done by women, not because of intrinsic characteristics or value of the job to the employer. To eliminate the discriminatory, ascriptive, sexist attitudes and assumptions which still determine and justify wages, they urge that employers adopt job evaluation studies to explicate the value (or "worth") of each job to an employer in terms of its level of skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions. Such studies, long used by management but now refined to eliminate biases against women, compare actual male and female wages to what they "should" be (according to the statistical regression model) if the jobs were all filled by *white men*. Ironically, management consultants urgently warn companies of the new dangers introduced by job evaluation studies, the fifty-year-old management technique recently taken over by dissatisfied employees.

The question of race, though built into the model and recognized on some level by the advocates and evaluators, does not figure explicitly in the abstract discussions of comparable worth. Empirically, however, female government workers (the main group likely to be strongly affected by comparable worth) include a high proportion of black women.

Opponents of comparable worth claim that women workers choose from a small range of traditionally earmarked "women's jobs" in spite of their low pay because they offer other compensations; easy exit and reentry, for example, mesh with women's primary family roles, allowing them to take time off for childbearing and rearing, to piece together a good fit between their work and family roles. These jobs are paid less than men's jobs because of "The Market," say the foes of comparable worth. Wages, they claim, are set according to laws of marginal productivity or by laws of supply and demand, and women, by crowding into fewer occupations that fit best with their essential family roles and responsibilities, reduce the market value of their wages. Their free market analysis denies such irrational but historical factors as outright discrimination (by workers, by employers, or both), and the existence, extent, and efficacy of unionization. The complex historical, social, and political conditions in which work and workers are evaluated, and wages are set, cannot be reduced to ahistorical equations.

While in the past female work patterns and wages more closely reflected social norms and family-work relationships, today many women and their families suffer severely from the continuation of these patterns. Numerous contemporary women (from those living alone to those heading their own families or co-heading families with husbands) are increasingly reluctant to accept wages they have come to see as inadequate and unfair, whatever the historical-cultural patterns in which they were once embedded.

In 1950, 70 percent of American households were headed by men whose income was the sole income for their family; by 1984 less than 15 percent of American families fit this traditional model. Women are no longer temporary and peripheral

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participants ("intermittent," in economic parlance) in the labor force. High divorce and illegitimacy rates and the enormous increase in female-headed households, record numbers of women (particularly those with pre-school children) in the labor force, and the concentration of female workers in women's jobs have converged into a complex dubbed the "feminization of poverty." While this concept masks some key internal distinctions and contradictions among women who are poor at a given moment, the fact remains that families headed by women continue to grow by leaps and bounds and are far more likely to be impoverished than those headed by men or by male-female couples. Many of these women and children would be helped considerably by the implementation of comparable worth. In addition to the issue of equity, comparable worth directly confronts the snowballing issues of need and adequacy.

But can we afford it? Isn't comparable worth, no matter how just, an impossibly expensive objective, likely to bankrupt the already unproductive, inefficient public sector toward which it's primarily directed? Or perhaps to impose an impossibly heavy financial burden on the taxpayers? In fact the cost is closely related to the strategy used in pursuing comparable worth. There are three basic strategies: on the government side, legislation and litigation, and on the non-government side, collective bargaining. A great deal of opposition focuses on the dangers of government-imposed settlements, whether new laws or judicial decisions. This criticism should be taken seriously. The costs of comparable worth are much higher when litigation has dragged on, job evaluation studies have to be updated, and back pay awarded. Most settlements, so far, particularly those reached through collective bargaining, involve very small percentage increases (less than 5 percent) to a city's or state's overall budget. (This is true in San Jose, Minnesota, and now in Los Angeles). The lesson is not that comparable worth is too expensive, but that comparable worth won through the courts is too expensive. The *threat* of litigation is likely to be more helpful than the litigation itself. Trade union leadership avoids the problems of bureaucratic regulation in which judges and lawyers arbitrarily define pay levels.

Unions stand the best chance to head off the dangers of polarization (between men and women workers, and between industrial and white-collar workers) that many skeptics fear. Union leaders, of course, must be (somewhat) responsive to the support this policy has among their diverse members. Internal education in key unions has aimed at increasing support among members, just as lobbying and some public education has aimed at drumming up support among politicians and the public. The AFL-CIO has officially endorsed comparable worth since 1979, while the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) and several of its more heavily female affiliates (AFSCME, SEIU, IUE, and CWA) have actually led the fight. Finally, given the overlapping and contradictory interests of union members, and the overall orientation of American unions, comparable worth is not likely to become ideologically abstracted from the workplace. Fair wages for women is one goal among others, and unionists will have to weigh it against these other issues (e.g. safety, job protection, and so forth) in each concrete instance.

More specifically, comparable worth offers unions an important bargaining chip in their current efforts to organize new women workers and, perhaps more importantly, to solidify the support of their female membership. This is particularly the case for heavily female public employee unions like the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the undisputed leaders of the nationwide movement for comparable worth. (Nationally, 40 percent of AFSCME members are women while 60 percent of all government workers are women.) Involved in comparable worth since 1974 when they supported an employee-initiated job evaluation study in the state of Washington, AFSCME gained wider attention during its 1981 strike in San Jose, California. That settlement included $130 million (more than 30 percent of the total dollar settlement) targeted to raise the wages of underpaid, mostly women workers in "women's jobs." But only after AFSCME's 1983 Washington state victory, in which the union won a federal district court judgment (now being appealed) against the state for discriminating against its female employees in terms of their jobs and wages, did the union and the issue of comparable worth gain national attention.

Not all predominantly female unions in the private sector actively support comparable worth. ILGWU represents garment workers (including many women) in an industry that is intensely competitive, requires low capital investment, and operates on a very low margin of profit. It cannot afford comparable worth, according to union leaders (and industry spokesmen, of course). Garment workers and their representatives have been far more concerned with enforcement of labor laws and regulations than with comparable worth.

Comparable worth draws support far beyond the union movement. As Eleanor Holmes Norton, then chair of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission predicted in the late 1970s, it has snowballed into one of the biggest issues of the decade. The Democratic party first endorsed the idea at its National Convention in 1972, and has continued to endorse it ever since. Countless government officials at all levels—from

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Carol Bellamy and Andrew Stein in New York City to U.S. congressional representatives Mary Rose Oakar, Patsy Schroeder, Geraldine Ferraro, to Senators Dan Evans, Alan Cranston, and Bill Bradley— have jumped on the bandwagon by holding hearings, commissioning studies, and sponsoring legislation. A bill mandating comparable worth pay scales just sailed through the House of Representatives by a vote of 413 to 6, indicating surprisingly wide Republican as well as Democratic support. In addition, 23 House Republicans just issued a report recommending the early adoption of comparable worth policies as well as stepped-up federal investigation of discrimination against women in the workplace.

Activity in the states is even more dramatic. Legislatures in thirty-three states have passed measures concerning comparable worth, while those in many others (eighteen at last count) have called for job evaluation studies to examine the extent of pay discrimination against women. New laws and studies roll in so fast that it is difficult to keep up with the latest score! These studies, as both advocates and opponents are quick to point out, typically provide evidence for collective bargaining, grievance, or law suits on behalf of aggrieved female employees, a large and increasing proportion of all government workers. (Government workers are, in turn, an increasingly large proportion of a state's total work force.)

Feminist leaders, organizations, and journals (including but not limited to NOW, the League of Women Voters, Women's Action Alliance, and *MS*) all support comparable worth but, with the exception of social scientists, they are clearly not at the center of the political mobilization around this issue. (This may well be because most feminist activists are not in predominantly female jobs in the "pink collar ghetto"; for others, welfare reform has seemed far more urgent than the workplace problems around comparable worth.) Feminist economists and sociologists, however, have contributed heavily to the mountain of data, analyses, and policy proposals pouring forth from the comparable worth movement. These social scientists are prominent among the "usual suspects" rounded up repeatedly for hearings in Washington D.C. as well as state capitals and cities around the country.

Perhaps most surprising of all, *Business Week* and the *New York Times*, hardly the vanguards of trade unionism or feminism, have both endorsed comparable worth in their respective editorial pages in the last few months.

There are two main reasons for the wide support that comparable worth has achieved. First, fear of its inevitability (a plausible fear continually reasserted by its advocates) has pressed government agencies and some large corporations to consider initiating comparable worth studies and policies, thus avoiding polarization and increased costs resulting from protracted legal suits. Second, comparable worth promises to expand individual equity, to fulfill the bourgeois promise to reward people's work and achievements on their merits, not in terms of ascribed characteristics of the worker.

In addition to the wide support given comparable worth, a number of leading business journals and organizations (including *Fortune*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Commentary*, and the

Their Right to Sanctuary

. . . The question that should be raised is whether or not the U.S. should owe a special duty of protection to the citizens of nations where the U.S. is either waging a war or materially (in the literal and figurative sense) aiding in the perpetuation of a war. My answer, it should be obvious, is yes, and I base my argument on the idea that innocents (in a war situation or otherwise) have a basic right not to be harmed or killed. If this nation's actions threaten this basic right then it should owe a special duty to rectify this wrong.

The Reagan administration has tried to buttress its argument that those coming to the U.S. are surely economic migrants because, they argue, asylum is possible (for how long and for how many is uncertain) in Canada and Mexico. What this argument completely overlooks is that the humanitarian actions of our neighbors should serve as an embarrassment to our policies, not a justification for them. If our weapons and military training kill people in El Salvador, why should we be surprised, or angered, when those lucky to survive come to this country? Canada and Mexico do not owe a special duty to the innocent citizens of El Salvador; we do.

Mark Gibney, *Commonweal*, May 18, 1984

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U.S. Chamber of Commerce) as well as conservative intellectuals and politicos (from sociologist Brigitte Berger and economist June O'Neill to the indefatigable Phyllis Schlafly), staunchly oppose the movement, convinced that it is neither good nor inevitable. In the words of Reagan-appointee Clarence Pendleton, ". . . this is probably the looniest idea since Looney Tunes came on the screen." The critics offer a concerted opposition, repeatedly emphasizing the efficacy of the "free market" (my quotes), the dangers of imperious "new class" experts and judges dictating wage levels in accord with their anti-market, utopian assumptions, and the credentialist, meritocratic justifications on which the movement rests. In addition, some critics from both left and right fear that comparable worth will sound the death knell to the goal of integrating men and women in the work force.

The fear of "new class" experts is especially ironic. Many of the pro-business opponents have conveniently forgotten the long history of wage-setting by expert job evaluations in the U.S., and write of them as though they are a new trick designed by greedy, pushy women and their representatives. Their fears of interventionist, activist judges imposing costly and impractical judgments is more firmly grounded in recent experience; at its best this fear creates a climate in which intransigent firms and governments are more likely to reach an agreement with their workers. Both workers and managers share an interest in their company's economic viability, which may seem far less urgent to a judge.

The fear of radical, utopian changes pitting "pink-collar" women against blue-collar men, wrought in the name of comparable worth, is overdone. As the movement has developed in the United States, it promises to fulfill the individualist, bourgeois promise to judge people's work and achievements on their merits, not in terms of ascribed characteristics of the worker. We are once again asked to stretch our values, to incorporate a new group, women workers, and to reward them in terms of the work they do in the labor market, not in terms of their femaleness.

Better from a distance (cont.)

(Continued from page 336)

source of the problem: the labor pool has an over-supply of women who are available for too limited a number of entry-level jobs. Second, even admitting that economic life is not always fair, who is wise enough to evaluate continuously the varying worths which society applies to jobs? Who will decide, for instance, the worth of four years studying elementary education at a first-class university compared to four years studying engineering at a community college? Who will weigh the relative worth of a super-salesman who actually spends much of his time preparing for a few million-dollar sales a month and a senior secretary whose long hours and mental strain are usually endured under someone else's direct control?

The answer of comparable worth advocates is that these factors be judged by a committee of personnel experts who regularly analyze job content and make comparisons of skills and experience in large firms and within government. Yet such experts as Norman D. Willis, head of a personnel advisory firm which the state of Washington employed in one of the most famous comparable-worth cases, says he recoils at the possibility that his classifications, or anyone else's, should become law.

Even if large numbers of employers were persuaded to apply comparable worth, the concept could not be limited to women alone. It would have to apply to men's jobs as well. Would not church workers and writers, to take just two obvious examples of underpaid professions, have claims on higher pay based on the comparable worth of their education, skills, and contributions to society? It's not hard to see why private employers cannot take seriously the idea of actually setting pay by comparable-worth rules.

Private employers pay the lowest possible wages needed to stay in competition. As long as the competition remains relatively open, workers benefit by maintaining the mobility and skills to move into better paying or more interesting jobs. The two are not always the same, but moving up usually means more demanding work. It may include not only greater skills but longer or irregular hours, and sometimes higher risks. Firefighters are paid for risking their lives in a pattern which alternates boredom with real danger. Most workers do not desire such a life, and those who do are thus able to demand higher wages and earlier retirements. Often the demands consist of entrance hurdles, like bar exams, advanced degrees and other qualifiers. Comparable worth proponents are sometimes accused of "credentialism" for seeking more pay for those women, like nurses and librarians, who also face educational hurdles for qualifications. But the pay which women, as well as men, receive is based not only on the credentials but also on market competition. If women want higher wages, they soon learn to avoid jobs with many qualified competitors, whether men or women. Why should employers pay librarians as much as electricians when the supply of the former will produce ample numbers at little more than the minimum white collar wage, while electricians are almost always scarce and, therefore, expensive?

Facing great hostility in the private sector, comparable worth has moved with some success into closed markets like state and local government where worker and union pressures combine with trendy political constituencies. Minnesota, a progressive state by most standards, recently passed laws requiring a study of job characteristics of all government jobs, state and local, and set aside money to start applying the program. In San Jose, California, a similar plan was initiated with $1.5 million for pay equity adjustments. What is wrong, then, with these plans, especially if they have public support?

The long-term problem is that comparable worth destroys the link between work and its marketplace evaluation. In the private sector, this linkage is vital to keep a company competitive. In government, paying secretaries without regard to their cost in the local job market destroys confidence in govern-

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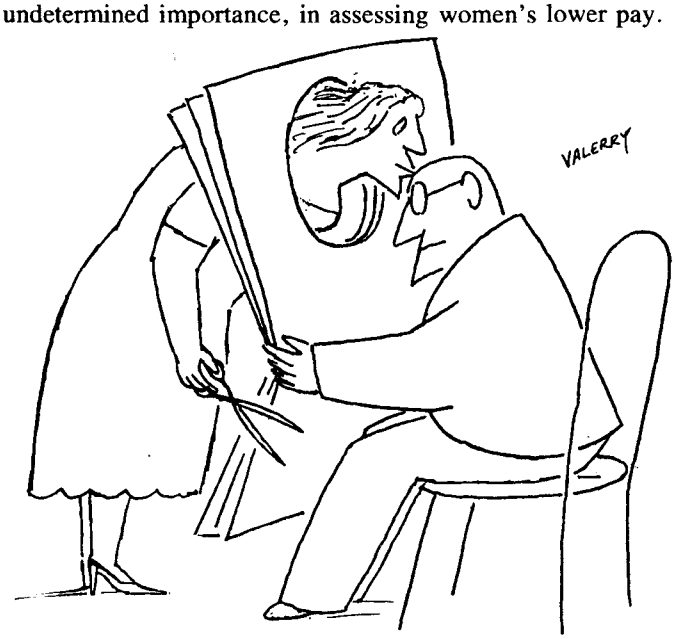
ment's ability to match the efficiency of business. Eventually, elected officials will have to account for the pay of their secretaries and their plumbers. If the secretary earns premium pay in order to match the plumber's wage, private sector workers who pay the taxes will object. It is not possible, over the longer term, to have pockets of comparable worth in an otherwise competitive economy without problems.

Take the case of San Jose. It conducted a jobs study as the result of a strike over comparable worth. The study concluded that both librarians and electricians were worth $3000 a month. In the local, competitive economy, however, librarians could be hired for much less while electricians in the area were paid more. The city must now pay electricians more than the study said they were "worth," while librarians are being paid above-market salaries. With victories like that, comparable worth will eventually fall of its own weight.

BEHIND ALL the arguments and the tactics of the comparable worth debate is the strong conviction that discrimination against women is a major factor in the labor market. But a careful look at female employment proves inconclusive on this point. Labor economists start by identifying known differentials on jobs and pay by sex, race, age, and occupational group. They weigh factors like intermittent and part-time work, interruptions for pregnancies, and other causes for lower pay for women. But because of the complexities in the job market there are always too many "other" or "unknown" factors of such analyses to explain the residual differential of lower pay for women. Yet, this inconclusive method of reductional analysis is at present the only "proof" of discrimination against women.

A recent article in a U.S. Labor Department journal by Janice Shack-Marquez, a federal economist, says, "Most of the studies of the pay disparity between men and women have been motivated by a desire to quantify the effects of discrimination in the labor market on women's earnings." Labor market discrimination, she notes, may be only one answer, of undetermined importance, in assessing women's lower pay.



The pay difference, she says, is much smaller when narrowly-defined white collar jobs are compared for men and women than in broader studies. Ms. Shack-Marquez says "not enough is known" about individual earnings "to be confident that all the labor market variables in which men and women differ have been isolated."

No such caution animates the comparable worth advocates. Editors of a recent book *Comparable Worth and Wage Discrimination* (Temple University Press, $39.95, 311 pp.) note that the authors, mostly women, represent a "broad spectrum" of views on the issue. Yet they agree that salary disparities between male- and female-dominated jobs "are based in large part on discrimination."

For the women's movement itself, comparable worth seems a very depressing course to take. To back the principle that women must be paid more because they are women implies a pessimism about the chances of full integration of women in the job market. If women can compete, this argument goes, they will; otherwise, they want to doctor the system so that the work they do gets more pay through government or judicial fiat.

Comparable worth advocates answer this argument in several ways, none fully cogent. First, they say, this competition of women in a men's job market will be enhanced if women in lower-paying jobs get the same pay as comparable men. Employers would then choose workers by merit, not gender. Second, the predominance of women in some low-paying jobs — retail clerking, secretarial and clerical work, child care and domestic work — has patterned so many women for so long that many are now too old to be retrained. Third, pay equity advocates say, these jobs are undervalued simply because women hold them. Why should women, who like to nurse or teach school, change jobs just to earn as much as men with comparable skills, education, and experience? Society is, in fact, subtly undervaluing jobs only because women perform them. And that, advocates say, is discrimination.

Correcting this discrimination will not bankrupt the country, proponents of comparable worth say, pointing to several cases where the system has been applied to government and private organizations. But these instances provide thin gruel to nourish the cause. While the only large-scale case, involving the state of Washington, is still in the courts, state taxpayers may have to pay over $1 billion if the suit prevails. The Washington state legislature's study of state jobs, which used the Willis scale, concluded that women's work was underpaid. Yet the governor's request for funds to implement the study was rejected in a budget crisis. The federal judge who heard the case decided that the state acted in bad faith by commissioning a study whose findings of pay discrimination were then not implemented. The state is certain to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court.

Even if the Washington state decision is sustained and the state government gets a huge bill for back wages, the case's impact on comparable worth remains unclear. Failure to pay, not the principles of comparable worth, are at issue here. Federal courts have, in several other cases, specifically

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excluded comparable worth from decisions about pay differences between men and women.

In a major decision in 1977 (*Christensen* v. *Iowa*), the Supreme Court cited the attempt to use the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as a basis for comparable worth. It rejected this approach saying: "We find nothing in the text and history of Title VII (of the Act) suggesting that Congress intended to abrogate the laws of supply and demand or other economic principles that determine wage rates for different kinds of work." Even in the 1981 *Gunther* case, cited most often by women as holding the door open for comparable worth actions, the Supreme Court said that the women prison guards' claim of lower pay because they were women "is not based on the controversial concept of 'comparable worth.' "

In order to make progress and to avoid another stalemate like the ERA, comparable worth advocates will have to either change the law or convince judges that existing laws require comparable worth interpretations. Neither the mood of the present Supreme Court, nor the explicit scorn of the Reagan administration is promising in this regard.

Over a dozen states have passed laws which refer to comparable worth, pay equity, or similar goals in their civil service systems, but most of these laws are too new or too vague to have established comparable worth up to now. Minnesota's 1982-83 laws on the subject were backed with an initial appropriation of $27 million to adjust state salaries. Until further studies are done, no one knows what the total cost to the state and its local governments, also covered, will be.

COMPARABLE WORTH is like the parable of the golden egg. If its advocates insist on using political pressures to pay women in government more than wages in the private sector, cities and states will eventually react to increased costs by contracting much of "women's work" to the private sector.

In conclusion, if comparable worth seems such a mistaken solution for misconceived problems, here are several principles with which to insure that maximum benefits accrue to women in their search for true pay and job equity:

● *Not every difference between men and women in the job market comes from malevolent causes.* Even if we reach the most perfect system of job access and pay for women, there may still be important differences in both the jobs they hold and what they earn. The values that women share may always be different from those of men. Anticipation of motherhood, its arrival, and its consequences will always affect women in the job market. Women's values, and the jobs they embody, are important for society and for the women who perform them, even when the pay is not high.

● *Economic rewards are not the only measure of job value for women or men.* Many male-dominated jobs also pay less than others with lower investments of skills, education, and experience. The churches, the universities, art, and the government often pay less than business and industry. But pay, for these lesser-paid workers, is fortunately not the only consideration in their jobs.

● *Choosing motherhood may not be fully compatible with other career choices.* This is such an old truth that it may *have* to be completely forgotten so we can learn it again. Yet many women know this before motherhood or shortly after. This fact of maternal life is not, in itself, unfair or a matter for the courts to handle. But motherhood should not bar the maximum participation a woman wants in the job marketplace. A genuine problem, worth some of the attention given to comparable worth, is how mothers of all ages can gain and hold such participation without sacrificing, jeopardizing, or postponing motherhood.

● *Comparable worth may have some benefits as an ideal if it leads toward better job integration.* Even if most plumbers will always be men and most day-care workers women, society benefits when rigid job segregation by sex is softened. First, most women do not want to be shunted away, by gender, from certain jobs even if they choose other work. Second, men and women complement each other in social values, temperaments, and sensitivities. This relation may help and almost certainly does not hinder any workplace, even if not all jobs are interchangeable.

● *Women should consider more selective and specific approaches to better pay and job integration.* In Colorado, nurses sought better wages through comparable worth action but lost in court. When they went on strike, however, they won. Job actions — whether in a single job, in one business or industry at a time, or nationwide — will probably command more attention and get more results in the long term than the murky concepts of comparable worth.

● *There will be no revolution in the workplace no matter what the strategy.* There have been important changes this century in women's wages which have risen faster than men's since 1900, according to a recent Rand Corporation study. The sixty cents a woman earns today, on average, to a man's dollar, will rise to seventy-four cents by the end of the next decade. But the competing interests of blacks, Hispanics, and others who want to change the job market according to their legitimate grievances will prevent a clear field for women. Black women, for example, have now closed the wage gap with white women. Black men, however, hold many of the male-dominated blue collar jobs which comparable worth proponents cite as examples of unfairly high pay. Further, the private sector has so far largely ignored the comparable worth approach as a frothy concoction of no import. If state or court actions move toward serious implementation of the concept, a fierce reaction to the perceived threat against the free market will come. This assault against comparable worth could make the ERA debacle look mild by comparison. To avoid this course, more measured, more confident, and more reasonable goals are needed for women.

One unspoken premise of the comparable worth fight is resentment against the male domination of the political, social, and economic life of our society. However, the appropriate response to this male dominance is a realistic demand for fairness to women in the job market, not a casually conceived and marginally tenable idea like comparable worth.

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Screen

REEL CHILDREN

STREETWISE & SCREENWISE

THE DOCUMENTARY, *George Stevens: A Filmmaker's Biography*, concerns not just film, but American history; it examines not just one American director, but a representative American life. Although it focuses on a career in movies, it has no in-house narcissism. It covers the kinds of hopes, compromises, and survival anyone from outside the film industry and film criticism can respond to deeply. The documentary, assembled with both craft and affection by George Stevens, Jr., examines the accomplishments of one of Hollywood's most innovative artists who worked *within* the studio system of the 1930s to 1950s. Stevens's success involves sneaking quality past the movie moguls' passion for a quick buck. Important as that is, the documentary also taps deeper veins of emotion, particularly in the way Stevens, Jr., crisscrosses his father's career and modern history. I knew who George Stevens was before I went, but I left liking him. In commemorating him, morever, his son has provided some heady nostalgia for everyone.

Stevens made a grab bag of films — from the early Katherine Hepburn vehicles like *Alice Adams* (1935) and *Woman of the Year* (1942) to nonsense classics like *Gunga Din* (1939); from late Laurel and Hardy to his American trilogy, *A Place in the Sun* (1951), *Giant* (1956) and *Shane* (1958). What unifies his work, the documentary makes clear, are two elements: a passion for the right shot (Stevens started as cameraman for Hal Roach's silent comedy classics) and a commitment to the presentation of serious human drama. "People don't come to the movies to escape or be entertained," he is heard saying on tape. "They come to learn about themselves." Although no Bergman, Eisenstein, or Renoir, Stevens qualifies as what the French cinema theorists christen an *auteur*, working within imposed guidelines to express his own vision as best he can. Stevens never changed Hollywood. He did use it.

The core of the documentary, ironically, involves Stevens's one departure from Hollywood, his work as director of a camera crew covering the liberation of Europe. It was, as he says on tape, "the most important experience of my life." Indeed. D-day led directly to Dachau, and some of the newsreels he made then became the kind of standard footage that we have seen so often on television during this spring's anniversaries. For Stevens, the experience led eventually to *The Diary of Anne Frank (1958)*, the closest thing to a fictionalized war film that he had the stomach to make, and the closest study of the Holocaust that late fifties' audiences were judged to have the stomach to watch. In Anne Frank's last words over the sound of blaring sirens — her dream that all Europe's sufferings would eventually lead to a better world — one senses Stevens's own idealism and the hopes of the initial post-V-E Day period. It was thought to have climaxed another war to end all wars.

You may think that you have seen all this before, but the film contains some novel material: the jewel is about thirty minutes of rediscovered color footage that Stevens shot after D-day which his son found in a dusty family collection. The difference between this and the usual newsreel is color. Stevens was one of Holywood's great color craftsmen (particularly in the classic *Shane*, with his sublime cinematography of the Tetons). In the D-day material, Steven's lifelike color reminds us, as only fresh art can, that these things really *happened*. Somehow I associated shots of bloodied G.I.s only with Vietnam, but Stevens's images of Normandy collapse past and present into one terrible process, and suggest how sad it is that some things just don't change. The shots of Dachau — again, in color — make even that familiar horror real.

The strength of the documentary involves the way Stevens, Jr., links his father's idealism — and sense of innocence betrayed — to his postwar "trilogy." In *A Place in the Sun*, he adapted Dreiser; in *Giant*, Ferber; in *Shane*, Jack Schaefer. In line with his penchant for highly literate products before and after, we are charmed to believe that he actually *read* them. In his adaptations, moreover, he expressed one consistent theme: the desperate struggle of the outsider to fit in and become part of some collective dream. Although standard even then, Stevens individualized the theme by allowing his heroes — played by Montgomery Clift, James Dean, and Alan Ladd — to have internal struggles that went far beyond Hollywood's notions of character conflict. His good guys weren't perfect, or necessarily innocent, but bore psychic scars, as in *Shane*, when Alan Ladd can't put aside his gunslinger past. It was for Stevens, perhaps, an allegory on war and peace: what happens if a pacifist meets a Nazi?

Stevens's moral intensity is also revealed in one telling section of the documentary, the account of his attack on Cecil B. De Mille's attempt to purge the Directors' Guild of "Communist sympathizers" in the early fifties. To Stevens, De Mille's tactics were the essence of the world that he wished D-day had destroyed. As retold in the documentary by De Mille's victims, the elder Stevens gave a key, passionate speech to stop the McCarthyite tide in Hollywood. It fits.

STREETWISE is no ordinary teenpix, no medieval fantasy (*Ladyhawke*), no sexual rite of passage (*Mischief, The Sure Thing*, et al.), no synthesis of sex-and-spies (*Gotcha*), no therapy session during detention (*The Breakfast Club*), and no sci-fi wonderworld or computer adventurism. *Streetwise* may be a very selective slice of contemporary adolescent life, but at least it's real. Nominated for an Oscar as best documentary of 1984, *Streetwise* provides a microscopic view of the Seattle teenage underworld. I left without teenpix in mind, but rather Conrad's cry, "the horror! the horror!"

Directed by Mary Ellen Mark, Sharon McCall, and Martin Bell, *Streetwise* is a montage of vignettes of "street kids"

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from broken homes surviving by the skin of their teeth. The boys panhandle; the boy-men pimp; the girls hustle. Rat, the youngest of the set, explains how to raid dumpsters and dupe Pizza Huts into providing food for free. Shadow, sixteen, fakes an i.d. to give blood for cash, since no one under eighteen is allowed. Tiny, a fourteen-year-old prostitute, dreams of both a "farm and three yachts," but has been turning tricks since twelve. The directors have wrenchingly caught these lives by following them around in cinema vérité-style, then effectively editing a composite of urban hell. The black eyes here are real.

The ironies of damned innocence in *Streetwise* are appalling. One part-time prostitute named Kimberley hems and haws about her profession, all the while dressed in a perfectly preppy-looking ski sweater. By name and costume, she looks like an escapee from some Muffie movie. In other scenes, especially one involving a hair permanent, wild profanity and curses mix with innocent fantasies, as if to these teens there were no incongruity between their bourgeois aspirations and their current situation.

The most affecting scenes in the documentary involve family — not the oft-mentioned, uncaring, alcoholic (or child-abusing) parents and step-parents, but caring mothers and fathers whose own liabilities prevent them from saving the next generation. Tiny's mother calls her "fourteen, going on twenty-one," and claims that prostitution is just "a phase Tiny's going through." But it's clear that she knows this is rationalization. However, her own alcoholism limits her action. One father, in jail for burglary and arson, pleads to his son to shape up and avoid his example. "You're everything I've got and unfortunately I'm everything you've got," he says pathetically. If the directors had a design in their understatement, surely it was to make us sympathize with these barren resolves, and to hope that somehow such broken lives can be healed.

Throughout the media, especially in TV movies on missing children, America seems to have acknowledged an enormous new social problem: child abuse on a scale only Blake, dismissed as a madman, had imagined before. *Streetwise* is a searing document in this national self-discovery. The street kids in the documentary stand on street corners, shakedown customers, beware knaves. Certain of these scenes, with slight changes of costume, seem straight out of Hogarth, and indeed resemble a recent BBC adaptation of *Moll Flanders*. The myth of progress may take advantage of us. It makes us think, or pretend, that evils such as child abuse aren't happening. Like Blake and Hogarth, *Streetwise* opens our eyes.

TOM O'BRIEN

Books: OF ROMANCE & MOCKERY

SMALL WORLD
David Lodge
Macmillan, $15.95, 339 pp.

Daniel M. Murtaugh

IT'S really quite a good idea if you let it run. Think of professors as wandering pilgrims or knights errant. Think of international literary symposia as pilgrimage sites or, better, because of their temporary and often inconsequent nature, as knightly tournaments. Then your plot becomes the free-form of romance and a tissue of allusions to the original romances that professors in (and out of) the book will respond to with small spasms of self-congratulation. You can bring the less learned or the less alert along a few pages later by an explicit reference to the literary source that you have been playing with.

The author, David Lodge, has created a large-scale satirical novel along the lines just described, and in *Small World* he does let the idea run, with exhilarating results. The satire works because it is not too single-minded in its moral purpose. Like Swift in *Gulliver's Travels*, Lodge has a good deal of innocent fun with the details of his created world, filling it with puns, coincidences, and intricate little comic scenes worthy of Charlie Chaplin or Harold Lloyd.

Small World takes up a number of characters that Lodge introduced in the 1979 novel *Changing Places*, principal among them Philip Swallow, professor of English at the University of Rummidge (something like Birmingham) and Morris K. Zapp, professor of English at Euphoria State (something like Berkeley). To these he adds an international collection of literary scholars with names like Textel, Siegfried von Turpitz, Fulvia Morgana, and Arthur Kingfisher, all of them humorous and yet also sinister embodiments of the corruption of literary studies. The last of this group, whose first and last names identify him with prototypes of once noble orders now infected and impotent, is the ultimate foil for the most important new character, Persse McGarrigle. This innocent poet-scholar from Limerick is the novel's Percival, a simpleton savior whose vision of the grail is purer than those of the jaded knight-professors restlessly moving with him from conference to conference. In a brilliant comic finale, the Modern Language Association of America Convention as the grandest of tournaments, Persse restores to the Fisher King Kingfisher his lost powers of achieving an original thought and an erection.

Throughout the novel Persse pursues a beautiful graduate student named Angelica. She is, apparently, part angel and part porn-queen, and she is maddeningly elusive. Early on Persse says, in his frustration, that it almost seems that she has a magic ring that can make her disappear. He thus nails down an allusion, implied by her name, to the heroine of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. Actually, she has something at least as good as a magic ring: her stepfather is an executive at KLM and can give her unlimited flight privileges.

That's the sort of trick Lodge plays in this novel, and it is worth pausing over.

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For one thing, the author's acknowledged debt to Ariosto puts him in a tradition of wry appropriation of Arthurian/Carolingian tradition which sees the whole chivalric enterprise as absurd without losing a certain childlike wonder at it. When Ariosto and his contemporaries picked up the tradition, Arthur and Lancelot had already been carefully transformed into puppets acting out tall tales. Their romantic idealism, in its very foolishness, could now point a moral about all earthly goals, amatory or martial, which were pursued too singlemindedly. Ariosto's wildly ramified plots (and Lodge's) are themselves a joke, but a joke with a serious point. For they show that man's strivings are aimless to the extent that they are egotistical. Before such quests the world itself becomes insubstantial, the mocking mirror of a disordered mind.

And yet, the jets scream as they whirl the scholars errant around the world, "Wheeee!" It's all grand fun amid the hustle and buzz of this crowded novel. Fun to contemplate with Morris Zapp the dissolution of the idea of the university as a stable physical entity, an institution which confessed its monastic origins in its very rootedness. In *Small World,* the American Express card replaces the library card and the professors eventually pursue the UNESCO Chair of Literary Criticism, the most attractive feature of which is that it is located nowhere — or wherever its occupant happens to be, a movable throne like the Arthurian *siege perilous* with which a character helpfully identifies it.

Some readers of this review may ask whether the fun of this novel is accessible only to English professors (or ex-English professors like me). I don't think so. As I suggested in my opening paragraph, the learned jokes are eventually self-explanatory, and much of the humor is both broad and precise in a way any intelligent reader can respond to. The novel's comic inventiveness also has a resonance of sadness. Most of the characters' frantic theorizing and frantic movement are finally revealed to be a struggle with aging and a sense of emptiness. What do I do now, they wonder. "What are you working on?" they ask each other hungrily. "How can literary criticism . . .?" writes one, and cannot finish the question. Morris Zapp concludes that even sex is a sublimation of the work ethic, standing Freud on his head and bringing us back to St. Augustine's vision of the soul forever restless in a world that is finally too small.

A compass & a milepost

BREAD NOT STONE

THE CHALLENGE OF FEMINIST BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza

Beacon Press, $17.95, 182 pp.

Karen Sue Smith

> *As you have seen, I am a writer who came of a sheltered life. A sheltered life can be a daring life as well. For all serious daring starts from within.*
>
> -Eudora Welty
> *One Writer's Beginnings*

IT may be understatement to describe as "serious daring" Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's efforts to construct a critical feminist interpretation of the Bible. For in Schüssler Fiorenza's thought the stakes are high: what stands to be gained (or lost) is nothing less than the "discipleship of equals" written about in Scripture and practiced, at least in part, by some groups of early Christians. The theological and political implications of a discipleship of equals supersedes what is usually called parity or equal access to positions of authority and decision-making within church hierarchy. Hierarchy itself is a construction of a patriarchal system, by definition antithetical to the equality and hence, well-being, of women. Patriarchy, then becomes an object for critique as women-church (the obverse of patriarchy) reflects upon what a liberating, non-patriarchal structure might be, and commences to lay its foundation. This is just one feminist task.

What about the biblical texts themselves which are also historical products of patriarchy? Can these texts be appropriated for women today? Schüssler Fiorenza says yes. She acknowledges that while biblical texts have indeed been used as a weapon against women, they have also been the resource for women's own struggle for emancipation and for women and men who work on behalf of the liberation of others (the anti-slavery movement is one obvious example). Women's experience includes both these relationships to Scripture: adversarial and inspirational. To emphasize the first is to find Scripture injurious to women and therefore to reject it. To emphasize the second is to suggest a less critical acceptance of these books than Schüssler Fiorenza proposes. Her agenda is to hold both realities in creative tension while developing a feminist mode of interpretation where the experiences of women, as well as men, are subjects of theological investigation.

Schüssler Fiorenza's exegetical work, *In Memory of Her* [Reviewed *Commonweal*, October 7, 1983] unearths and reclaims the biblical stories of first-century Christians as they struggled with the discipleship of equals. The six essays in *Bread Not Stone* are compiled for a different purpose, less exegetical and more strategic. The book functions as a compass and milepost for an emerging movement unsupported by the status quo, and needing to be reminded of its goals and its direction lest it get sidetracked, slowed down, or defeated altogether.

This compact volume provides the student of the Bible a rationale for the feminist critique of patriarchy: the destructive impact on women and on biblical religion that results when the male person is considered normative. It is patriarchy, not men as a gender group, which represents the institutionalization of this viewpoint; it is patriarchy which needs to be examined and dismantled.

Furthermore, Schüssler Fiorenza states the inclusive goals of feminist interpretation (the solidarity of all oppressed persons), and points to the pot holes along the road ahead. These include: forgetting that neutral "scientific" ob-

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servation is impossible for the interpreter of the Bible; collapsing essential differences among persons and groups into a universalist rhetoric of one generic interpretation for all; misconstruing the Bible as the *locus* rather than the *root model* of feminist hermeneutics; overlooking the destructive power exerted by patriarchal hermeneutics on women of today; abdicating the rigors of intellectual scholarship in lieu of feminist apologetics or popularized interpretations of Scripture.

Schüssler Fiorenza speaks in terms of heuristic models; she presents lucid definitions of terms like "women-church" and "pastoral paradigm" when necessary, and decries slippery notions like "women's experience" when used as though it were gender-determined.

Bread Not Stone illustrates what it advocates by citing the place of modern feminist interpretation within the tradition and by alluding to a score of women scholars, economists, artists and poets. Chapter Four exemplifies the feminist hermeneutical approach by arguing the case for a feminist reading of the household codes found in several Pauline letters.

Although Schüssler Fiorenza's style cannot be counted on for humor, it does contain a healthy dose of irony. *In Memory of Her* is named for the disciple who poured costly ointment over Jesus — an example of how patriarchy lost this woman disciple's name though her story survived. It is the biblical version of the modern song, "I'll Never Forget What's Her Name." Preserving these memories is an immediate feminist task. *Bread Not Stone* offers a similar irony. Isn't it precisely tablets of stone that we associate with Scripture ever since Moses came down from Sinai? Or at least since the concept of inerrancy was conceived? Yet Schüssler Fiorenza uses bread as a metaphor for the Bible: bread "that nurtures, sustains, and energizes women as people of God. . . ." And what feminist theologian after years of dedicated work to shape a more inclusive church does not feel like the child who asked for bread but received a stone?

While each essay in this collection is self-contained, making it an ideal teaching resource, the book suffers from repetition if read in one sitting. Yet this book must be taken as only one part of an ongoing conversation. No proponent of dialogue, whether Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza or David Tracy to name two, can circumscribe the very dialogue she or he advocates. Judging by the quotes from students and by references to the work of other scholars, Schüssler Fiorenza is listening. She is consistently engaged in the process of theological discourse both in the classroom and outside it. One of her stated future hopes is to see more pastoral-theological biblical centers where people from different professions, races, classes, sexes, and cultures can explore the meaning of biblical texts along with open discussion about the presuppositions of the academy and ecclesiastical institutions as well. This proposal takes both academic and community standards seriously.

Finally, Schüssler Fiorenza sounds a pastoral note resembling Jesus' response to those who criticized his healing on the sabbath day: the sabbath is made for people not the other way round. Schüssler Fiorenza says, "The authority of the Bible is not that of control, but of enabling power." Her dare is that we take the Bible seriously, interpreting it in light of oppressed communities in our world today.

After the anger, the challenge

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT FETISHES
E. Eboussi Boulaga,
Translated by Robert R. Barr
Orbis Books, $11.95, 238 pp.

Eugene Hillman

AGAINST the fetishism of the "missionary religions" in Africa, which social scientists might discuss under the heading of ethnocentrism, Professor Boulaga offers a profoundly searching and sharply critical effort to "recapture Christianity." This aim of the author, a former Jesuit professor of theology, now teaching philosophy at the Ivory Coast National University, is reminiscent of Vincent Donovan's *Christianity Rediscovered,* and Joseph Donders's *Non-Bourgeois Theology* (both from Orbis).

Boulaga is himself an African with a recently renewed appreciation of his own historico-cultural and religious roots which had been all but cut away by the resocialization processes of the mission schools, churches, and seminaries. This pious chopping of roots continues today, although now under the direction of Africans who have, more successfully than Boulaga, repudiated the "paganism" of their parents and grandparents, while diligently internalizing the ways and views and values of the West.

This is why the Christian churches in Africa still resemble nothing so much as Western spiritual colonies. "A Christianity of empire," says Boulaga, "imposes itself only by tearing up its converts by the roots, out of where-they-live, out of their being-in-the-world, presenting them with the faith only at the price of depriving them of their capacity to generate the material and spiritual conditions of their existence." In contrast to this religion of imported forms, structures, conceptions, rules, and abstractions, the author speaks poignantly of the African tradition that was scorned when not simply ignored: "It was being born, living, and dying in the most empirical manner that ever could be, that furnished the framework, the matter, and the experience of God's sacrality and sovereign immanence."

The prepackaged Christianity presented to Africans, with only negative references to their traditional and socially integrated ways of being human and religious, is that of Western bourgeois society with all of its inherited fetishes, notably its excessive and disintegrating individualism. As in the West, this leads to "post Christianity" after which there is no religion at all. As in the West also, in spite of everything, a faithful remnant remains. But there are increasing numbers of believers who do not "practice the faith" — and practicers who do not believe.

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Fetishism localizes "the holy," "the sacred," "the divine"; it encapsulates "the truth" in the terms of one historical moment. This limits religious orthodoxy to the cultural symbols of one small segment of humankind, and confines orthopractice to their ways of doing things — as though the historico-cultural and religious experiences of the vast majority in other times and different places had little validity for themselves, and no relevance at all for that small segment. Fetishism confuses reality with local myths and symbols, limping analogies and lisping metaphors, imaginatively endowing these ephemeral cultural inventions with powers they can barely signify or represent, much less contain. Such literalism, especially when universalized, prepares the way for idolatry, ultimately for atheism.

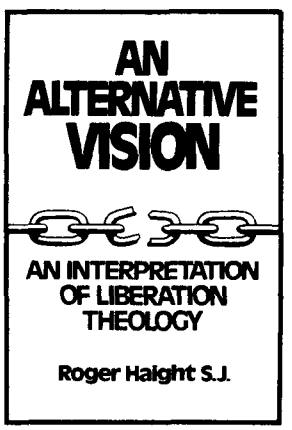
An example given by the author: "An immediate, 'personal' rapport with Jesus and God by psychic acts transpiring within our intentionality is what we rightly call paganism, fetishism." This is so, argues Boulaga, because we human beings can relate to God, the unfathomable mystery and ground of all reality, only through the historically and culturally created "mediations and processes that really constitute us as persons." As the mystery of the Incarnation suggests, our real encounters with the living God are always and only through our encounters with other living persons during our own brief historical moment within a circumscribed cultural situation.

The author's criticism of what he calls, among other things, "neocolonial Christianity" in Africa is well-founded, richly deserved, and relentless. His feelings are certainly understandable. But the writing is sometimes overly sardonic and the argument overstated. No quarter is given for the sake of the minority of foreign missionaries and African pastors who stood firmly on the side of African cultures and religions, and paid a price for this stand when it was less popular than it is today, while Boulaga himself was still following the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*. Nor does he show much sympathy for those who, sharing his views and feelings, continue the struggle, from the inside, against the chronic ethnocentrism of ecclesiastical bureaucrats, careerists, and "living saints."

Even Christianity's "preferential option for the poor," the recently reaffirmed commitment to social justice for the world's disinherited masses, evokes only a sneer from the author, this is "too sudden not to shock." The current situation in Africa did not develop overnight — nor was it induced by the weather alone, much less by the victims themselves — in which one hundred and fifty million human persons were set on a path of chronic hunger, with hundreds of thousands right now in the agonies of epidemic starvation. The final death toll for the 1984 calendar year was said to reach five million, with probably another five million permanently disabled by severe malnutrition. For a well-documented example of a specifically American contribution to human misery in just one African country, Zaire, see the early chapters of Jonathan Kwitny's *Endless Enemies: The Making of an Unfriendly World* (Congdon & Weed, 1984).

After long and dark ages of acquiescence in the socio-economic systems of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism, ecclesiastical officialdom now proclaims emancipation for the victims and integral human development for all. Is this rhetoric to be taken more seriously than their perennial proclamations of esteem for African cultures? "We are showered with massive, lyrical assertions," replies Boulaga, "but not favored with a theoretical presentation of the practice already under way." While in Africa myself for many years, I saw only one such "practice" (conscientization) among the victims of systemic injustice. But this responsible project was abruptly terminated by the national episcopal conference after the national security authorities judged it inappropriate, if not seditious.

Christianity without Fetishes offers many more timely and profoundly provocative topics for Christians to meditate upon, if we care to, and if we dare to. After the ventilation of anger in the first two chapters, the work becomes more



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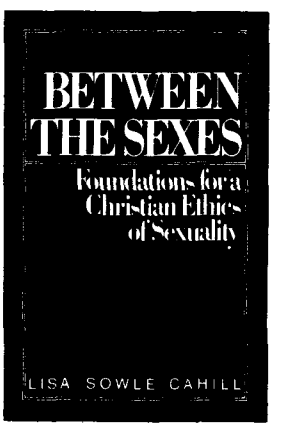

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readable, even-handed, and convincing. It is predictable that this book will soon be listed as required reading for courses in seminaries, schools of theology, and departments of religion. For servants of the Christian churches in Africa, its impact could be something like that of Bishop Robinson's *Honest to God*.

Organizing in search of a vision

THE RADICAL VISION OF SAUL ALINSKY

P. David Finks
Paulist, $9.95, 275 pp.

COMMUNITY IS POSSIBLE

REPAIRING AMERICA'S ROOTS

Harry C. Boyte
Harper & Row, $6.95, 219 pp.

Robert Fisher

HISTORY not only informs our present but is written by it. P. David Finks's biography of Saul Alinsky and Harry Boyte's study of community activism follow on the heels of a contemporary movement. The neo-populist interest in community organizing emerged in the 1960s, blossomed in the 1970s and early 1980s, and now needs, among other things, a sense of its historical roots to inform its future direction. These two books seek to answer that need.

It never fails to amaze me how few people have ever heard of Saul Alinsky. Most college students, even history or political science majors, never have. Most social change activists know the name and can associate it with "conflict" tactics or community organizing, but rarely are they conversant with much more about the person, his vision, and his method of grass-roots organizing.

P. David Finks asserts that Alinsky's contribution to the social change movements of the past thirty years is equal to that of Martin Luther King, Jr. "The large-scale mobilizations of our time — women, anti-war and nuclear activists, consumers, environmentalists — whether they know it or not, owe most of their bottom-up organizational strategy and hard-hitting, non-violent tactics to Saul Alinsky." The claim overshoots the mark but it is an interesting commentary that the person who, more than any individual, is responsible for the "backyard revolution" of the 1970s and 1980s is a relative unknown. Finks's book is the long awaited and long overdue, first published biography of Alinsky. It is a splendid book for anyone seeking a very readable introduction to the life and work of Saul Alinsky. It will, however, disappoint those more familiar with the subject.

Finks's study is organized around brief case studies of the major organizing projects Alinsky initiated or directly influenced. It traces Alinsky from his early years in Chicago to those as a criminology student, with access to the Capone gang, at the University of Chicago, from being a supporter of the CIO and a distant admirer of Communist militancy in the 1930s to the founding of the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, the Community Service Organization, and a host of Industrial Areas Foundation projects in the 1960s. The book is excellent in its description of Alinsky's personality, personal life, and significant relationship with the Catholic church.

Admittedly the fact that this is the first biography of Alinsky reflects the difficulty of the task and the complexity of the subject. Alinsky is no easier to deal with in death then he was in life. His life was filled with contradictions; the results of his work were uneven. Nevertheless, Finks had access to the Industrial Areas Foundation records, as no other researcher has, and while he has combined with these invaluable materials an impressive number of interviews with people who organized with Alinsky, I only wish he had done more with the opportunity.

Some Alinsky organizing projects, such as FIGHT in Rochester, in which Finks was a participant, are handled well. But in general, analysis is limited. Serious problems and changes in goals and strategies that occurred in efforts such as Back of the Yards and The Woodlawn Organization, for example, are never discussed. To see the segregationist problem of the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council as due to longevity or organizational prosperity is more than oversight. If Finks was indeed serious about evaluating Alinsky's radical vision he would not have skirted the serious concerns friends and foes raised about Alinsky's theory and practice. While Finks's biography is clearly the place to begin, a critical biography, perhaps along the lines of Robert Caro's *The Power Broker*, still needs to be written. Alinsky is a figure important enough to warrant such extensive study.

Boyte's work is more satisfying, a creative and often impressive exploration into the nature of community activism and the ideal of "commonwealth" in the United States. Boyte continues his work, most widely recognized in his *Backyard Revolution*, to counter the cynicism and despair of the 1970s and 1980s. He offers organizers and activists hopeful, positive examples of activism which he sees as the potential seeds, the models, for a more effective progressive/left effort in the future.

Boyte presents an impressively wide range of case studies, based on historical research and extensive interviewing, from the Iroquois Confederacy to current efforts of COPS in San Antonio, the San Francisco Organizing Project, and lesser known activities in Lowell, Massachusetts, and St. Paul, Minnesota. *Community Is Possible* is nothing less than a highly accessible and engaging study of grass-roots democracy in action.

REVIEWERS

DANIEL M. MURTAUGH, *formerly an associate editor of* Commonweal, *now works in the Treasurer's Division of W.R. Grace and Company.*

KAREN SUE SMITH *is an assistant editor of* Commonweal.

FATHER EUGENE HILLMAN, C.S.SP., *now teaching at Salve Regina College in Newport, Rhode Island, served as a missionary in Africa for nineteen years.*

ROBERT FISHER, *the author of* Let The People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America *(Twayne), teaches history and social policy at the University of Houston Downtown College.*

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While I liked the book and found much of it fascinating, I remain uneasy with the tendency in Boyte's popular writing to see the seeds of progressive change and an alternative to corporate capitalism in almost every community gathering. This book concludes with an all-too-brief chapter which sounds a note of caution, emphasizing that the contemporary efforts discussed are only the beginning, only the stirrings of a community-oriented alternative, and that there are limits and ambiguities inherent in populist movements. Boyte is best as a theoretician rather than a popularizer of left populism. I'm still waiting for him to apply his critical sharpness to a much-needed study of the successes and failures, the virtues and limits of grass-roots populism. *Community Is Possible* makes overtures in that direction. It is a thought-provoking work which offers fresh ideas and proposes new directions. But for the larger part it continues too much in the populist-booster vein of Boyte's earlier work.

I suspect Boyte believes the time is not right for serious criticism. I'd suggest the time is perfect. One of the problems community organizing has traditionally faced is its continued emphasis on being "non-ideological." Alinsky saw "non-ideological" organizing as the cornerstone of his efforts. Most community organizing since then, from the New Left in the early 1960s through the left populists in the 1970s and 1980s, has continued to downplay the positive role of a mobilizing ideology and has emphasized instead, as Alinsky did, that community organization must be built around the material self-interests of community members. The history of community organizing illustrates, however, that this lack of a galvanizing vision which transcends personal advantage has ruined countless community organizing projects. Some, such as the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, became openly racist and segregationist; others, including most Alinsky organizations, had little to sustain them beyond their "normal" life span of five or six years.

Boyte begins to get at this issue of the role of a mobilizing ideology in his discussion throughout the book of the need for communal values and a vision of commonwealth. While Finks titled his book *The Vision of Saul Alinsky*, there is very little on the issue of vision and ideology. Alinsky possessed an "anti-fascist" ideology; he even went so far in his early career to refer to himself as a "professional anti-fascist." But he thought it manipulative to share his vision, his political critique, with the people he was organizing. Not sharing it openly, however, was simply another form of manipulation. If the thousands of citizen action efforts that grew up in the 1970s are to have a substantial impact on American life and politics it will take, at the outset, a mobilizing ideology, an alternative critique of the present, and a vision of the future, around which people and groups can be organized. This was central to the success of the populist farmers' movement of the 1890s, the labor and unemployment movements of the 1930s, and the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The historical lesson is no less valid now.

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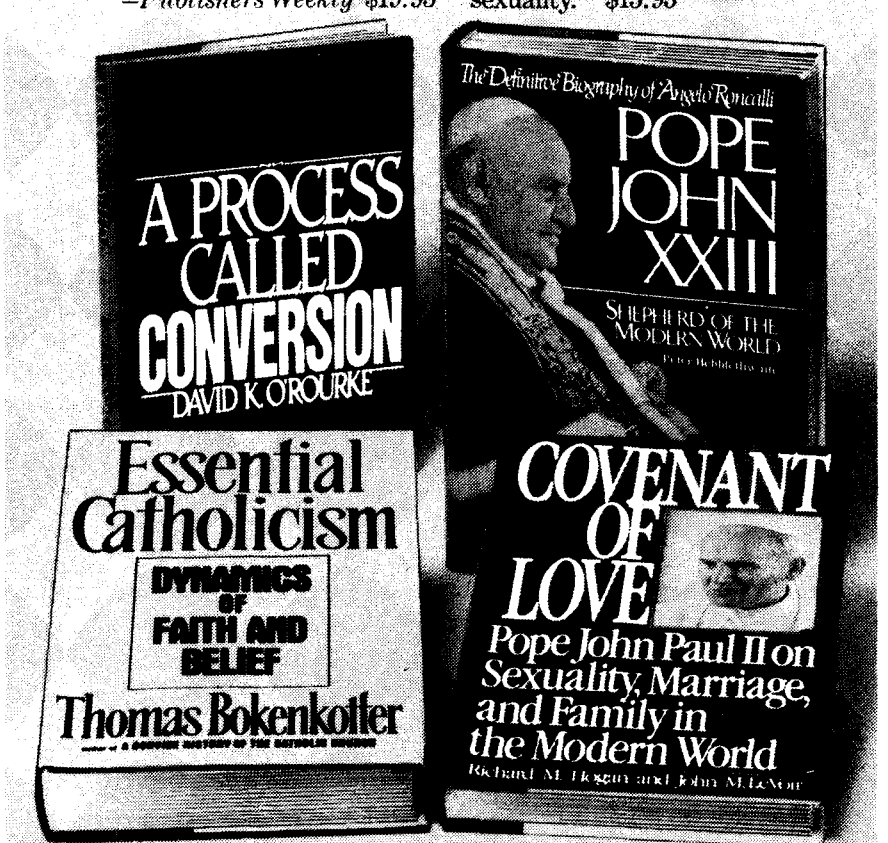
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Correspondence

(Continued from page 322)

that they had no records on file to verify my claim.

Since employees of the church are often paid at or near a subsistence level, this kind of inefficiency is a glaring hole in what might be considered our own safety net. If this quality of management is typical — and McCarthy suggests it is — then the mote in our own eye needs to be removed. This is clearly a moral issue.

We need to take an honest look if we are to light the way as an examplary economic agent. Yes, guidelines for this purpose should be high on the bishops' agenda. Whatever the pain, a hard look at how we treat our own employees is indispensable.

JOHN CLANCY

Paying for libel

Rensselaer, Ind.

To the Editors: I share Isidore Silver's concern ["Defame game," February 22] over the large damage settlements in libel suits against the media. His solution seems complicated. I would like to make a few suggestions, even at the cost of seeming simplistic, about libel and damages.

The court should not be concerned about the intent of the media or whether there is reckless disregard for the truth. Those notions are too subjective. That the media can put out an untrue story about someone and yet not be obliged to retract, simply because the person cannot win a libel suit against it, is an odd situation for a justice system that is supposed to be concerned with justice. The court should be concerned with the truth.

If I feel that a medium, let us say a newspaper, has published an untrue story about me, I present the facts and ask it to print them and to retract its own story. If it does not, the question of intent vanishes and I am free to bring suit, in which my only obligation is to prove the fallacy of the newspaper story.

With regard to damages, the legislature should set up payment scales for different categories of cases, just as the government now does with regard to Medicare payments to hospitals. If punitive damages are imposed, the money should go to the public, *not* to the defendant. If someone runs a red light and smashes my fender, I get compensation for the damage. If the guilty party is fined at the same time for a traffic violation, I don't get the money. There is no reason why I should profit from another person's punishment.

This may seem like a simple approach, but I think it has the benefit of common sense. And it can be brought about by the enactment of suitable laws.

CHARLES J. ROBBINS

Experience speaks

Walnut Creek, Calif.

To the Editors: Isidore Silver's proposal ["Defame Game," February 22] struck me at first as one of those legal absurdities that outrage the layperson. In libel cases, Dr. Silver wrote, a jury should first consider the maximum damage award, and only after that should the determination of libel be considered, and by another jury.

Thinking back, though, to my own greater-than-average experience as a juror in auto damage suits in Los Angeles, I think Dr. Silver may be right. In one case, as jury foreman, I tried to steer deliberations in what I considered a logical course from point to point; we were soon hopelessly deadlocked.

Learning from this, in another case I sensed that some jurors didn't want to

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find for one plaintiff because they thought she was exaggerating her disability. That had nothing to do with the defendant's responsibility for a rear-end collision that led to a four-car smashup, so I proposed that we first consider the amount of damages. The other jurors rejected this, but in fact they were soon discussing just that point. When all were assured that the jurors sympathetic to the lady would not demand too much for her, it didn't take long to find for her and the two other plaintiffs.

In another case (pedestrian v. bus), although the plaintiff's plight was tragic, I and other jurors thought her evidence was weak. The likely size of the award may have kept us from finding for her, or deadlocking, out of sympathy.

LEON LUCKASZEWSKI

Myth & fact

Ridgewood, N.J.

To the Editors: In the midst of his review of *2010* [January 11], Tom O'Brien gives a *cri de coeur*, always a perilous thing for a critic to do: "Why do we persist in the sentimental myth that something up there will solve all our problems down here?"

When we stop, Mr. O'Brien will have to find some other place to write his reviews since *Commonweal* will be out of business.

On a less lofty plain, the hero of *Birdy* [January 25] becomes obsessed with a canary — a plain yellow canary — not a parakeet as O'Brien would have it. And, whatever the failings of *Mass Appeal*, it's puzzling to have your critic take the playwright to task for putting the collection after the sermon. When was the last time O'Brien went to Mass or has he himself given up the sentimental myth?

MICHAEL GALLAGHER

The author replies

On the canary, Mr. Gallagher is absolutely right; it's my mistake.

On *Mass Appeal*: of course the collection follows the sermon, as I observe in Mass (nearly) every Sunday. My point in the review of the film was that Jack Lemmon's claim that the collection follows the sermon "*like a Nielsen rating*" is inexact; the collection follows the sermon because it introduces the Offertory, and is representative of our offerings to God and his church. My focus was on Lemmon's analogy of liturgy to media marketing, typical of *Mass Appeal*'s cuteness, but not depth.

In the review of *2010*, when I mentioned "the sentimental myth of something up there" not saving us, I emphatically meant the sci-fi motif that extra-terrestrial life will bail humans out of their problems. I apologize for the possible misinterpretation that I meant traditional belief in God. *2010* vaguely uses an idea of God but subordinates him to a typical sci-fi process of redemption. One of my first pieces for *Commonweal* was an essay on science fiction and its quasi-deification of biological extra-terrestrial life in *E.T.* [March 13, 1982]. The essay has been reprinted several times in religious journals because of its strong criticism of the glaring *this*-worldliness of science fiction. Like *E.T.*, *2010* badly substitutes some sentimental simplicities for a genuine belief in Spirit.

TOM O'BRIEN

Créme de la créme

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: As a reader who ordinarily doesn't notice reviews — and one who almost never writes to pu' ;ations — the review by Robert Jone March 8]of Joyce Carol Oates's *Solstice* vas of such extraordinary interest that I fel impelled to write to thank you for its te! ing brilliance that made me not only thir of Oates's writing in new ways, but of y own thinking as well. . . .

LEILA E.B. HADLEY

Corrections: In Robert Jones's essay, "Confessing Our Selves," [May 17, 1985], a typo escaped us which destroyed the thrust of his opening paragraphs. The sentence on p. 305, third column, beginning "If hagiography is the history of self-education . . ." should read "If hagiography is the histor of *self-eradication*, autobiography is the narrative of self-glory."

Also in the same issue, our apologies to John *B*. Breslin, who became John *R*. Breslin in our pages.

THE EDITORS

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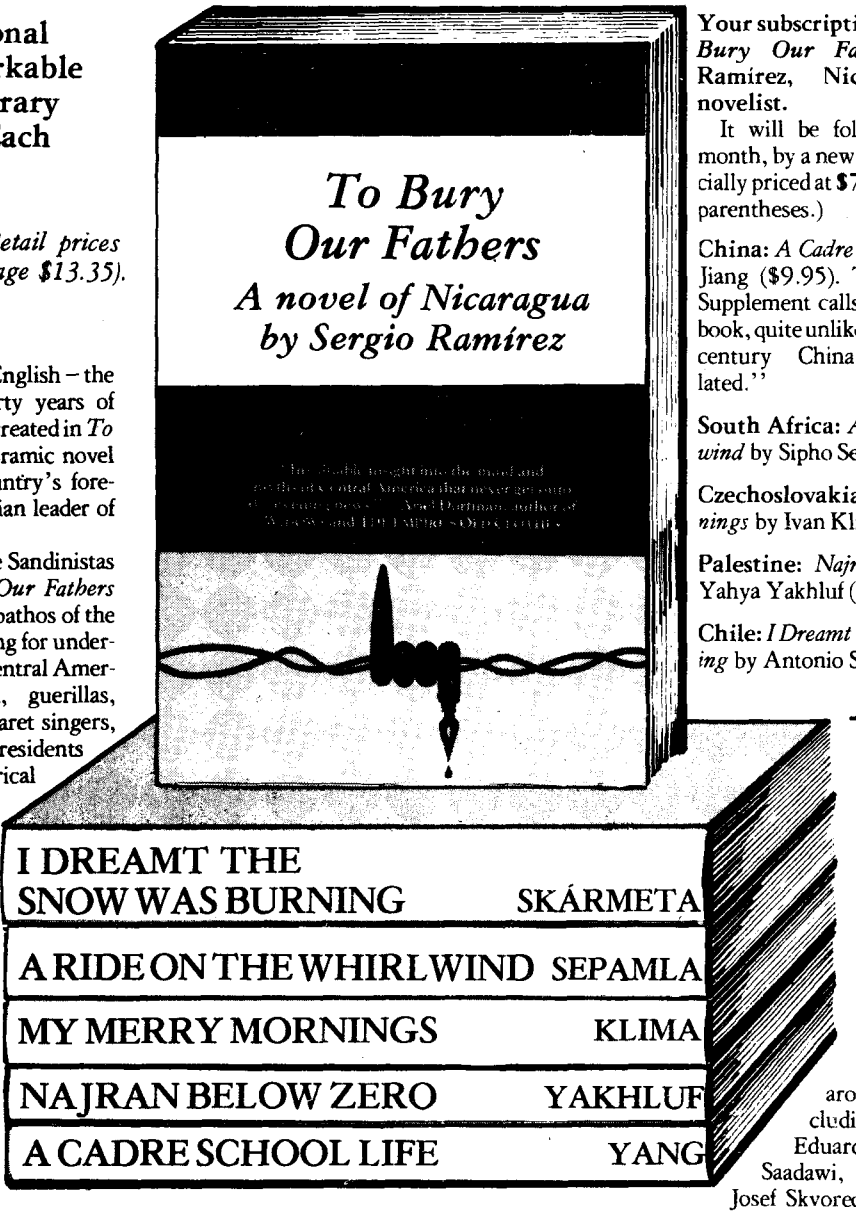
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